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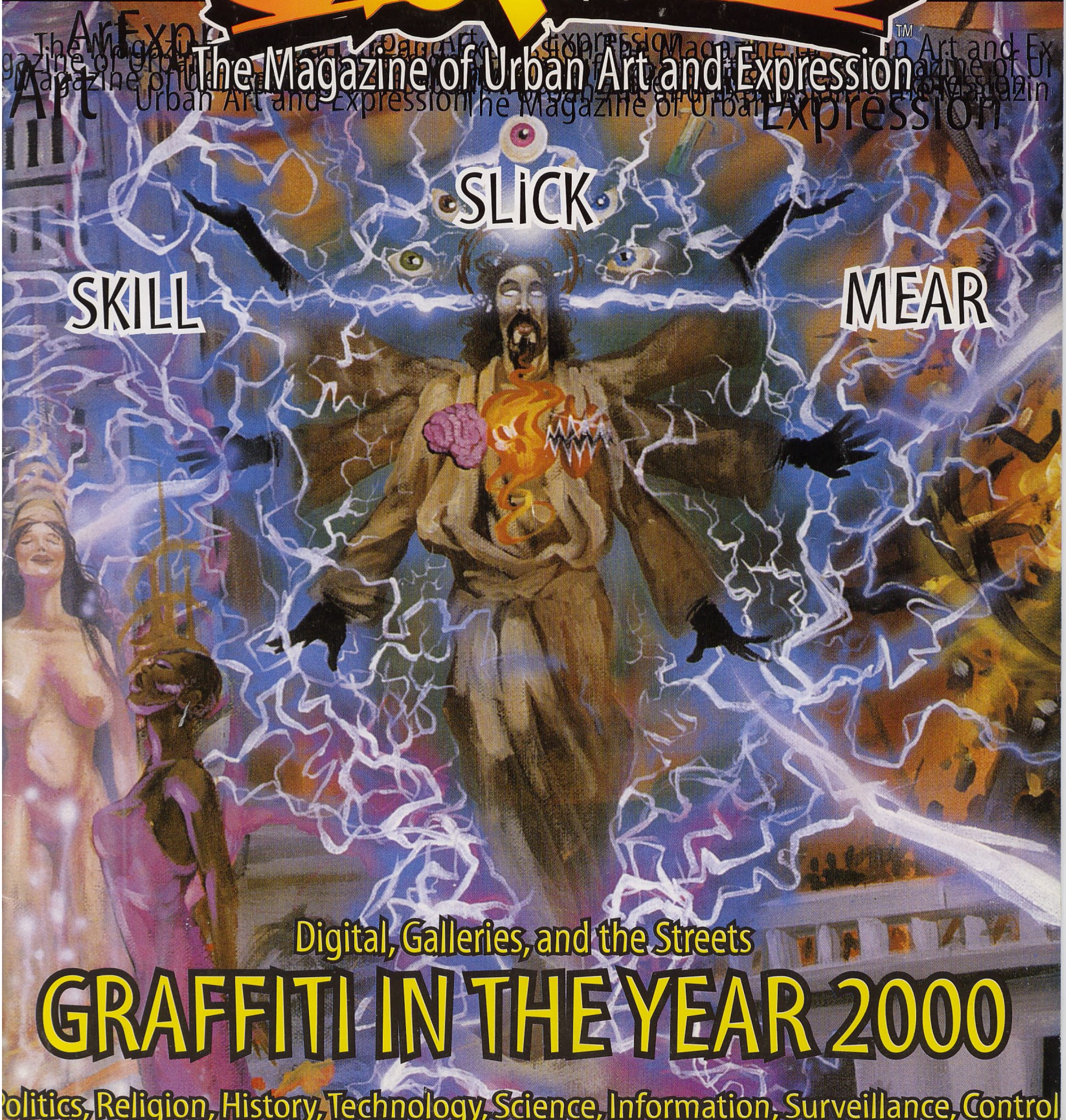
Volume 1 Issue 2

The Magazine of Urban Art and Expression



SLICK

SKILL

MEAR

Digital, Galleries, and the Streets

GRAFFITI IN THE YEAR 2000

Politics, Religion, History, Technology, Science, Information, Surveillance, Control

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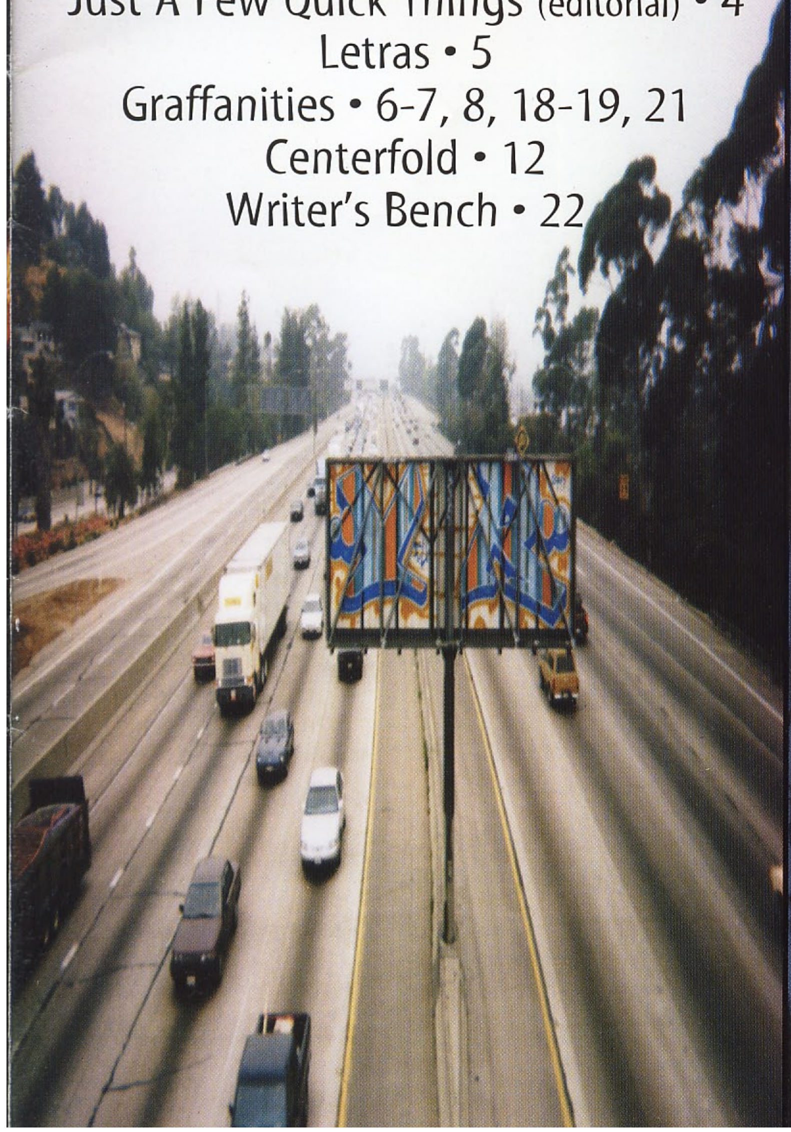

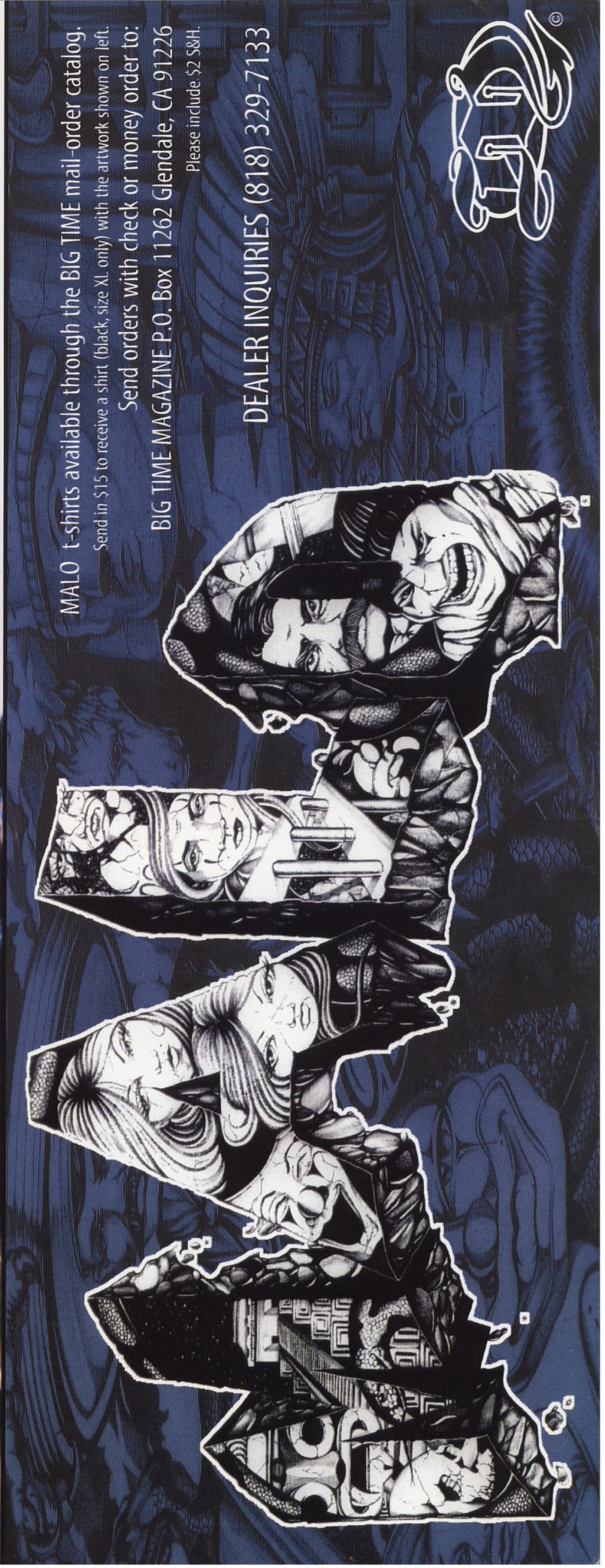

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Just a few quick things...

'Sup and welcome to the long-awaited second issue of *BIG TIME*. In the last couple of months, we've received an overwhelmingly positive response from our readers in support of our premiere issue. Your flicks, sketches, letters, comments and suggestions are deeply appreciated; they've caused us to work even harder to bring you a tight street publication that is both fly and thought-provoking. Because of your support, we've gone all-color, added more articles, more flicks and a thicker cover - all for the same low price. Expect more surprises in the near future...

In this issue, we focus on *SLICK*, *MEAR* and *SKILL* - three cutting-edge left coast graffiti artists who represent a good cross-section of people that bring very different experiences and approaches to Writing culture, and offer us a small glimpse at the many directions/possibilities that the graff movement can take. Their philosophies, mediums and works are a testament to the great diversity within this discipline.

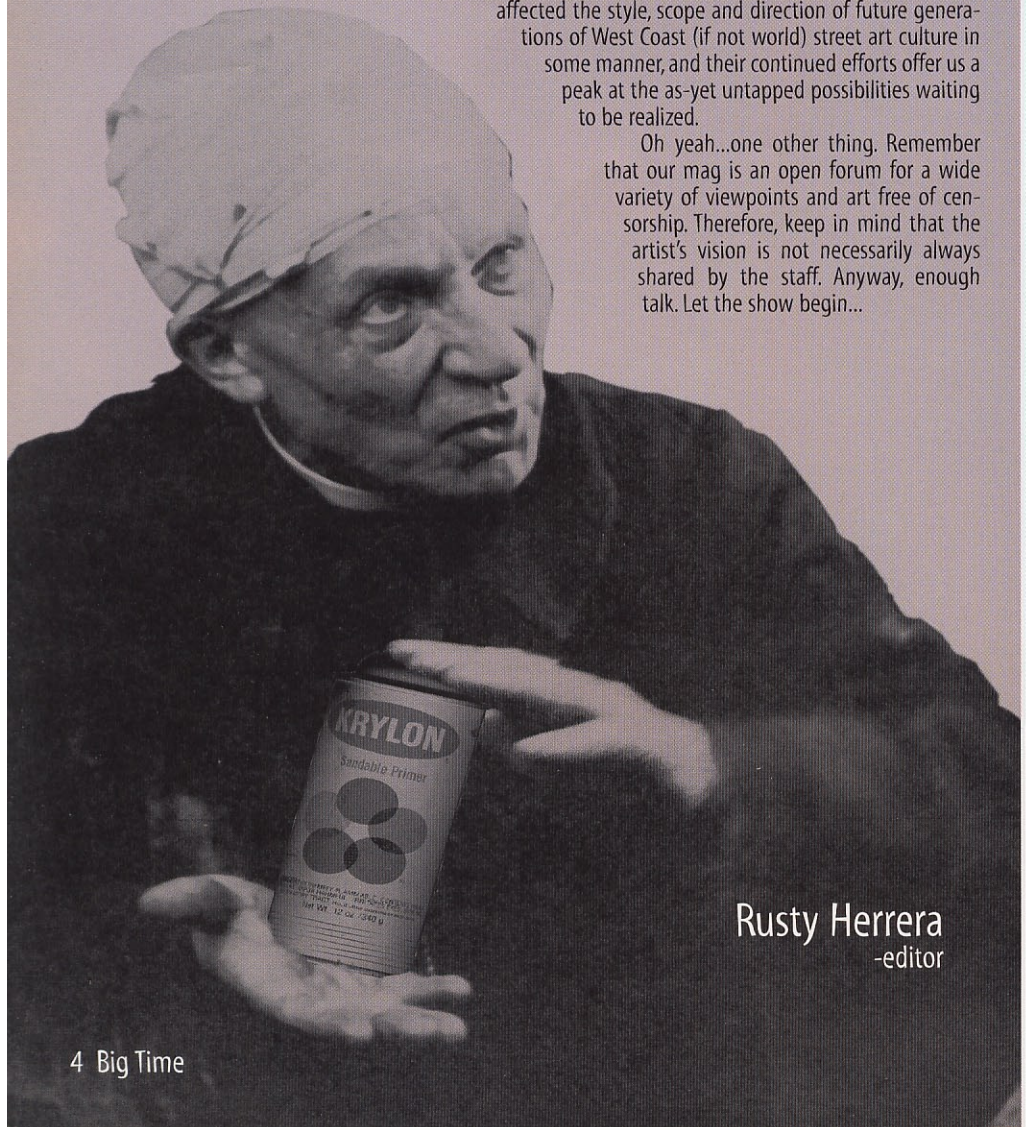
SLICK, who needs no introduction, is by all accounts a world-reknown style master and graffiti king, successful graphic designer and clothing manufacturer. Credited with being the first to bust those "photo-realistic" characters which took the world by storm in the mid-to-late 80's, he also pioneered the use of flourescent colors into piecing (and if you've ever used flourescent colors to shade in your characters, you can thank him for it). Not content with the standard question-and-answer interview format, *SLICK* decided to digitally design his own article to (re)create his own version of graffiti history (some fact, some fiction - just like your story, son!!!), borrowing from sources considered by many to be sacred graffiti bibles while always pushing the boundaries of controversy and innovation. Although confessing a permanent love for the can, *SLICK* sees digital as the new frontier in the future of urban street art culture.

MEAR started getting up in the late 80's, and it has led him to a successful career in graphic design as well. His canvas-oriented paintings (one of which graces the cover of this issue) wrestle with such issues as religion, politics, class and individual freedom (or the lack thereof), while *MEAR* and a growing number of graffiti artists see galleries as playing a major (if not primary) role in the future of the culture.

SKILL is a highly-respected L.A. graffiti king who's career dates back to the early 80's, and is credited with creating and maintaining one of the oldest and consistently-running crews in the city. Raised in an urban environment, he has - throughout the years - been an active teacher, mentor,practitioner and avid supporter of Hip Hop in general and graff in particular. From mosquito hits etched into the back of the 268 to T-to-B, E-to-E productions in every part of town, *SKILL* is considered to be a graffiti "purist;" opting to embrace the classic time-honored traditions of inner-city writing culture over the contemporary emphasis on shows, T-shirts and websites.

Each of these talented individuals has permanently affected the style, scope and direction of future generations of West Coast (if not world) street art culture in some manner, and their continued efforts offer us a peak at the as-yet untapped possibilities waiting to be realized.

Oh yeah...one other thing. Remember that our mag is an open forum for a wide variety of viewpoints and art free of censorship. Therefore, keep in mind that the artist's vision is not necessarily always shared by the staff. Anyway, enough talk. Let the show begin...



Rusty Herrera
-editor

The Magazine of Urban Art and Expression

BIG TIME

Volume One • Issue Two

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BIG TIME does not condone illegal activity. We do, however, support free thought and expression, and encourage you - our reader - to think for yourself. Moreover, the thoughts and views expressed are not necessarily those of the staff.

Shout Outs:
Gary Rable and S.G. Creative, Chang, Turtle and the staff at Industry Insider Magazine, Pisto Pete, Scotty Z, Kutmasta Kurt, Jason D, Limbal, Mare 139, *Jack STN, Mosco, Cisco LDK, Serc 213K, Big Angel (Rola: Wish You Were Here),* Ben Higa, Chase UCA, Aura, Amaze OPM, 2mer TKO, Nervy Nerv, Brett Webb, Salvador C., Saber AWR, Opal, Chemist, Miter, Cerze, Vox WGS, Mews, DJ Dwendz + the Foundation Funkollective...
and You!!

Letras from BIG TIME readers.

What's up *BIG TIME*?

Just picked up your first issue, and I gotta tell ya it's dope! I liked your interviews with *NUKE* and *ASYL'M*. You think in the future you can interview *HEX* or *SLICK?*

Well, I hope the flicks I sent ya are good enough to make your next issue. Peace.

"MITER CHP" Escondido, Ca

Peep P.9 for the dope SLICK hookup...we hope you like it. It wasn't easy to track him down; we caught him on a remote mountaintop in Northern China where he's been coolin' with the monks, meditating on the ill Shaolin styles. As for the flicks, keep watch.

Dear editor,

I had the opportunity to look at the first issue of *BIG TIME* magazine and noticed that some of the graff art displayed in the magazine was done in L.A. I have a brother coming out from New Mexico (to L.A.) who was inspired to be an artist by graff. It would be great to show him some of the graff art showcased in the mag, but no specific locations were listed. I was wondering if there was any way to find out how I could take him to some of these locations. If this information is confidential, I understand.

I wish the mag continued success and look forward to your response. Thank you.

JAISON W. Northridge, Ca

Responding to your request is difficult for a number of reasons. First, some of the work shown in mags such as ours is sent in by artists who don't always provide information as to the exact location of the work, and we don't necessarily want them to (for obvious reasons). Secondly, there is a disproportionate balance between the number of artists in a given area and the availability of safe, legal places for them to paint. Therefore, it's generally understood that a writer's work - once completed - will probably not last two weeks before getting buffed or before another piece goes up on top of it (especially in a city like L.A., which may have thousands of writers). Therefore, you might find the spot but not the work you wanted to see. Thirdly, yards (or "Halls of Fame") are in a constant state of flux. They could be legal one week and illegal the next, depending on who has bought or sold a property where pieces get put up, or whether or not it is election time. There is also a multitude of other factors I won't get into. However, the famous pavilion at Venice Beach Boardwalk should be 100% legit by the time you read this, so you and your bro can check out some fly styles by some of L.A.'s best. Or, stay tuned for info on upcoming events.

Hello there.

My name is "FEAR" aka "KRIE" from Sydney, Australia. I seen the story about your mag in another magazine, it felt good to hear someone taking a serious note about tags. I myself take this subject very seriously. Graffiti style tags is no different to the fine art of calligraphy. The difference is tags have no barrier or laws. It's amazing with the risk and the speed the tags are done, that such fine styles come out. I'm looking forward to seeing your mag, and I've enclosed outlines of my marks.

"FEAR RBS" Sydney, Aus

Dear *BIG TIME*,

I'm so into graff, it's crazy. Just the other day I went to Oakland, where I saw TDK do their thang with my favorite writer, *TWIST THR*. The reason I enjoy his work is how he brings graff to another level. He brings his art to live out meaning and makes it not just spraypaint, but something you'll stay up thinking about. I would like to meet him; it would mean a lot to me. Thank you and stay real *BIG TIME*.

JASON V. Sonora, Ca

Some writers seem to be under the impression that in order to burn you need to have fifty colors, characters, backgrounds, special tips, etc.; that you have to go up HUGE. This is not necessarily true, and writers like Krie and Twist know it. If you ain't got it, no amount of colors, paint mixing, stencil caps, etc. can hide it. Personally, I've seen marsh hits that have taken out whole productions. It also goes to show that some writers have only a limited overstanding of writing culture. Sometimes, less is more.

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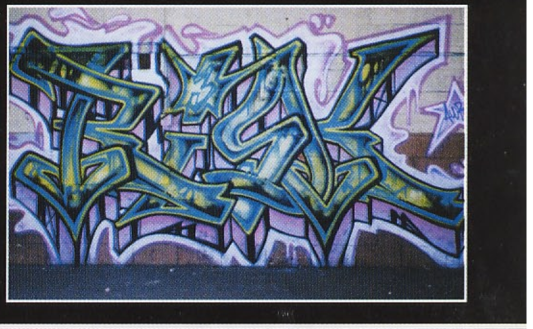

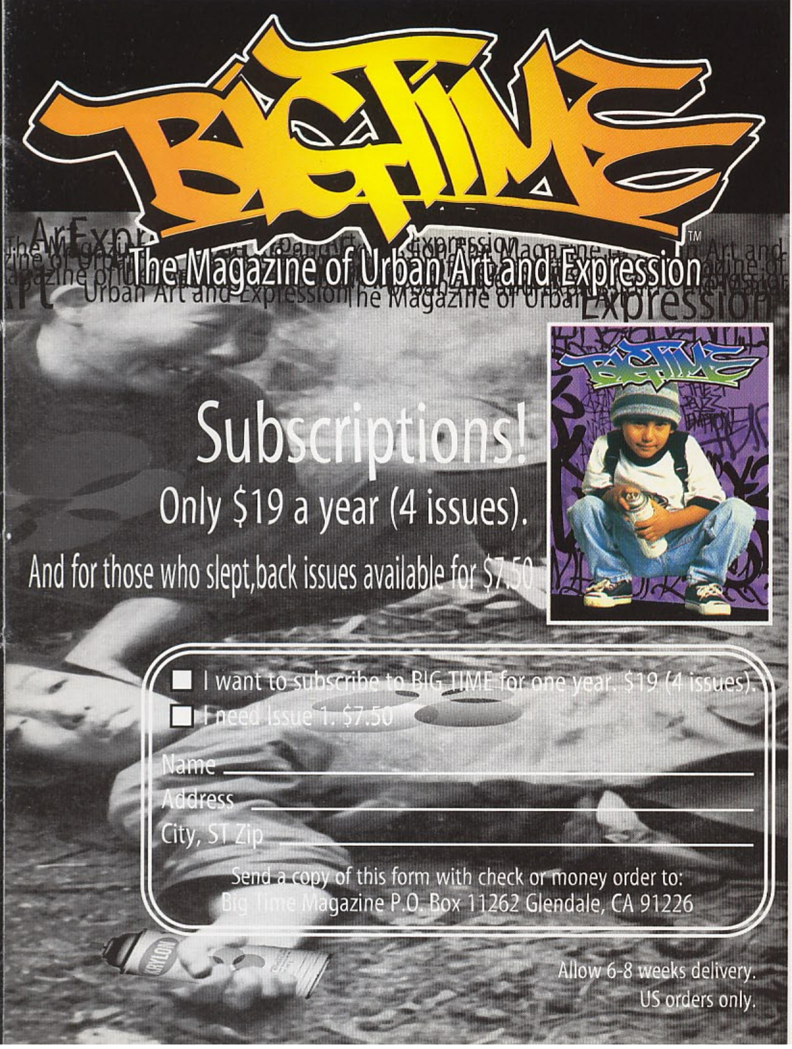

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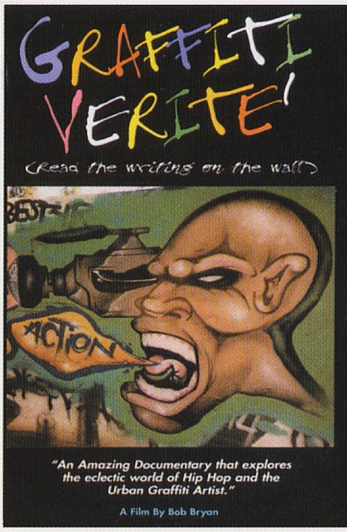
GRAFFITI VERITE'
(Read the writing on the wall)
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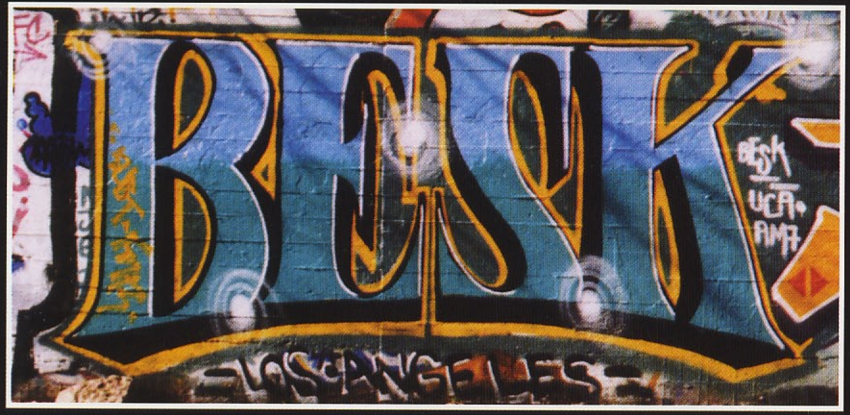
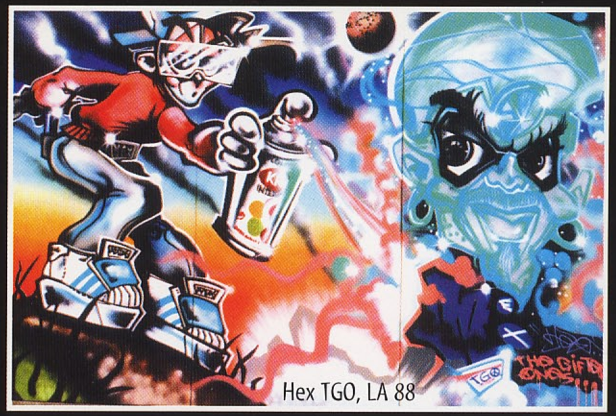
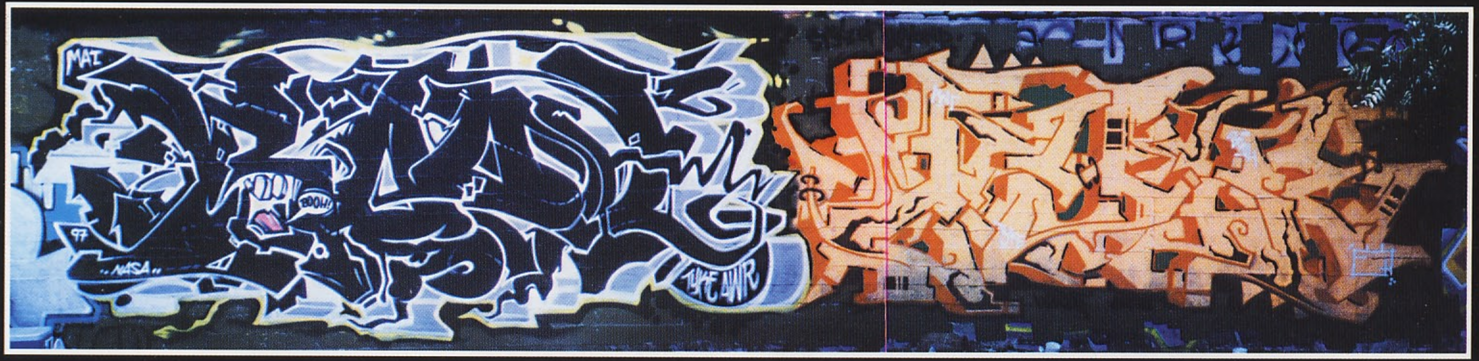
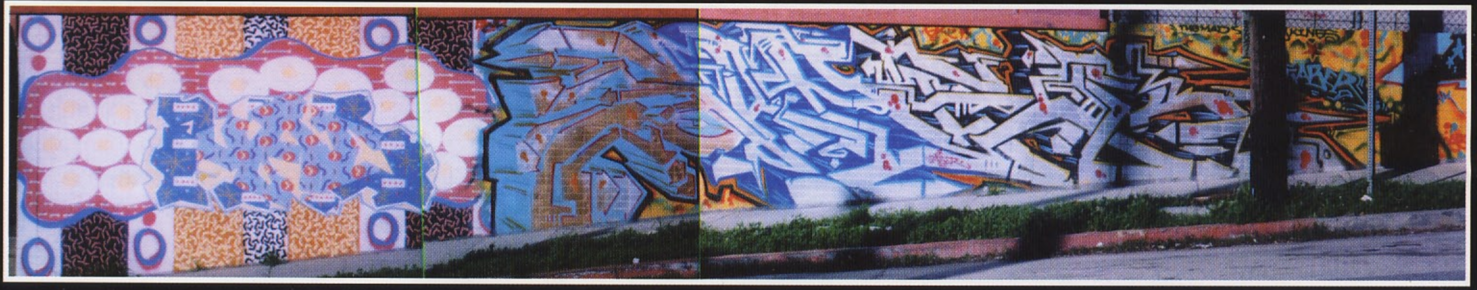
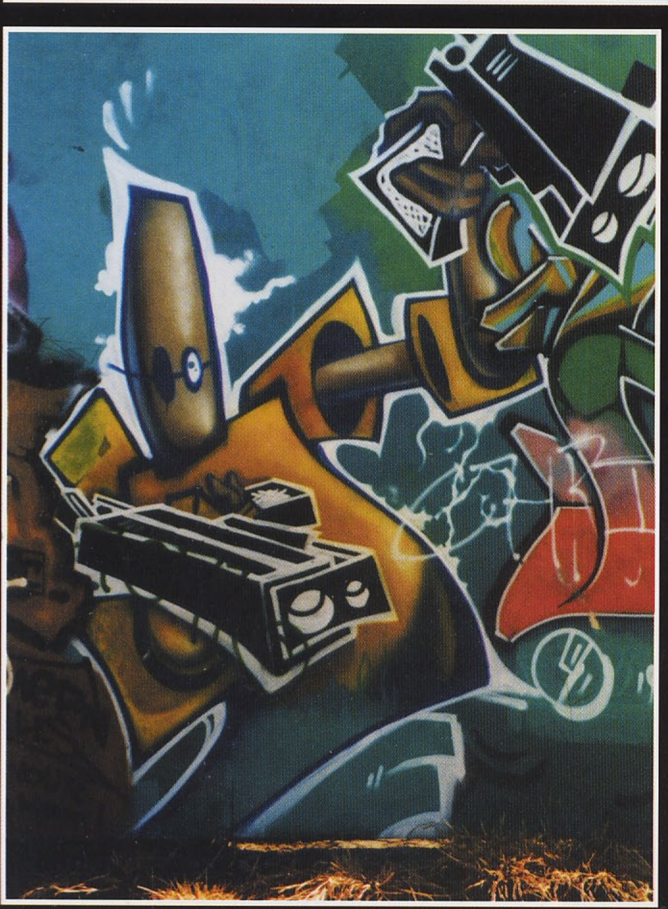
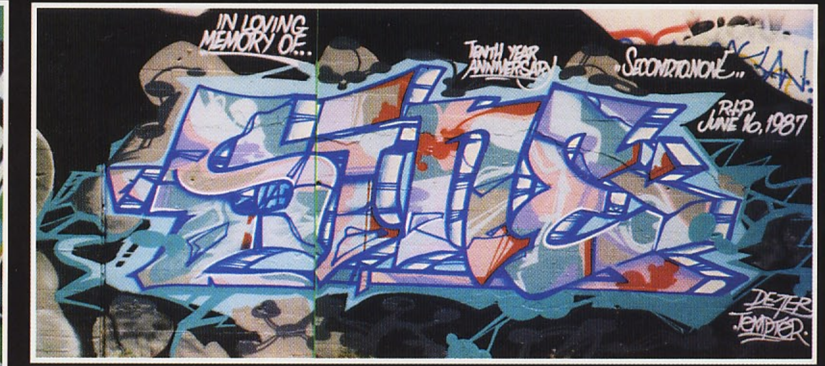

BESK
LOS ANGELES

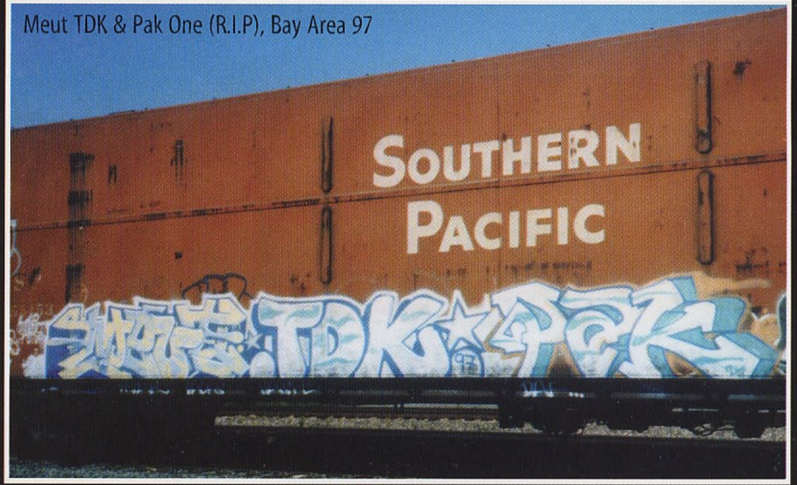

Hex TGO, LA 88

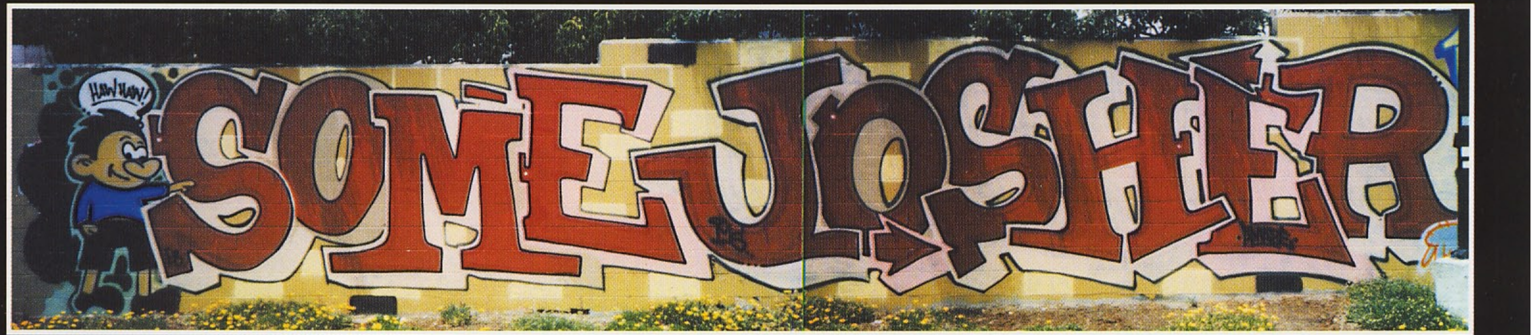







IN LOVING MEMORY OF...
TENTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY
SECOND TO NONE
R.I.P. JUNE 16, 1987


Meut TDK & Pak One (R.I.P), Bay Area 97
SOUTHERN PACIFIC
TDK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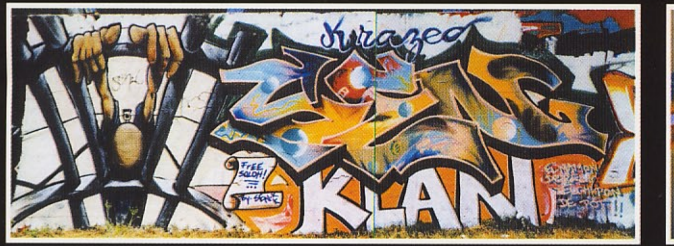
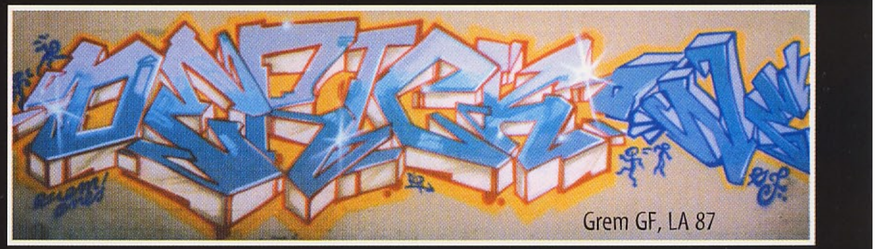
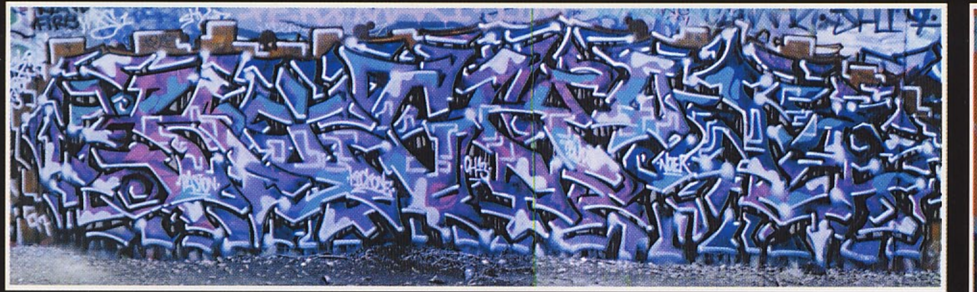
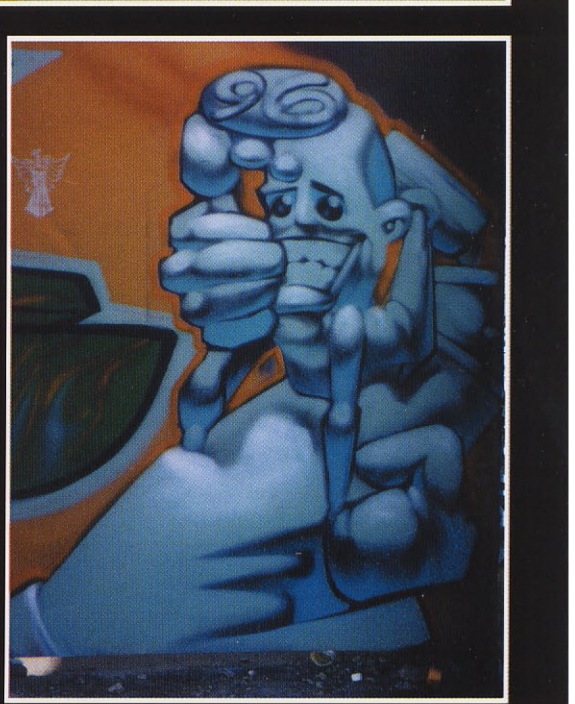
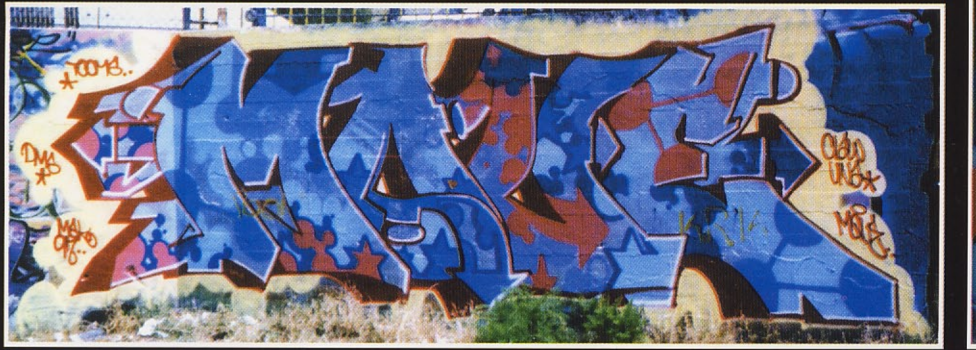
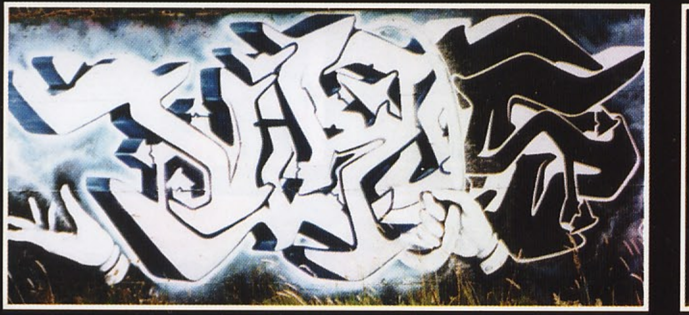


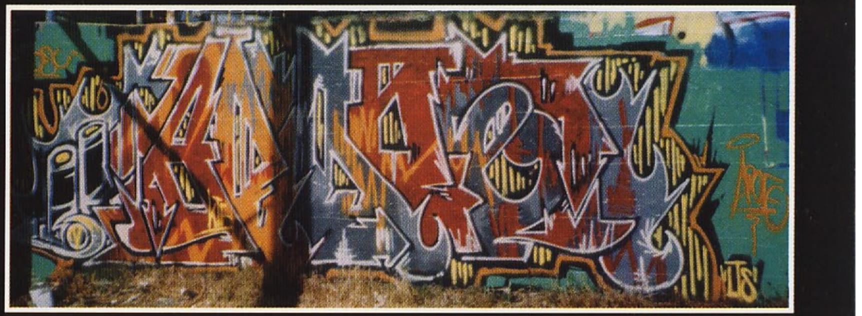

Grem GF, LA 87

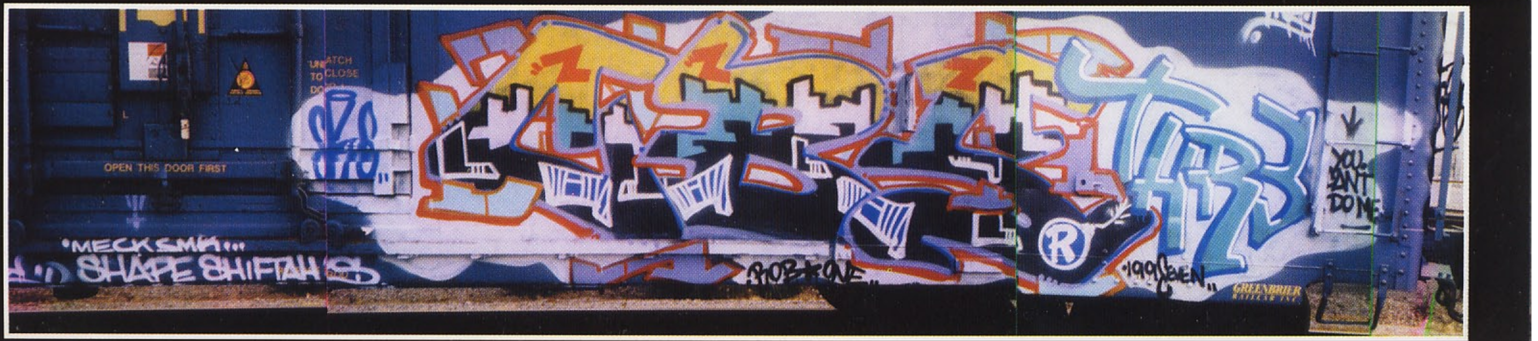


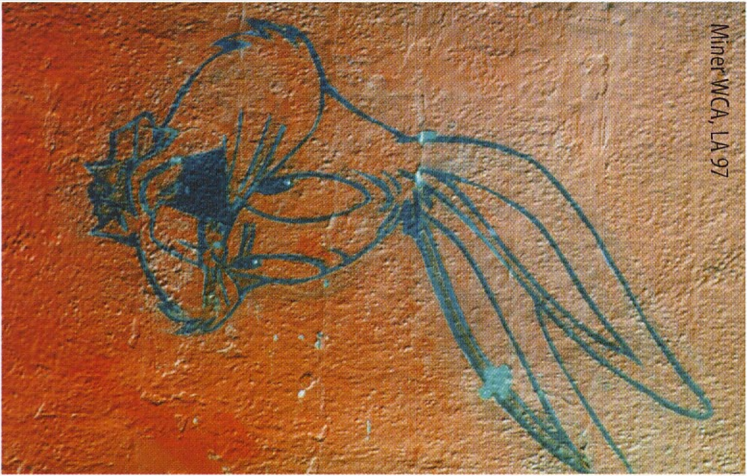









OPEN THIS DOOR FIRST
SHAPE SHIFTAH
YOU CAN'T DO ME



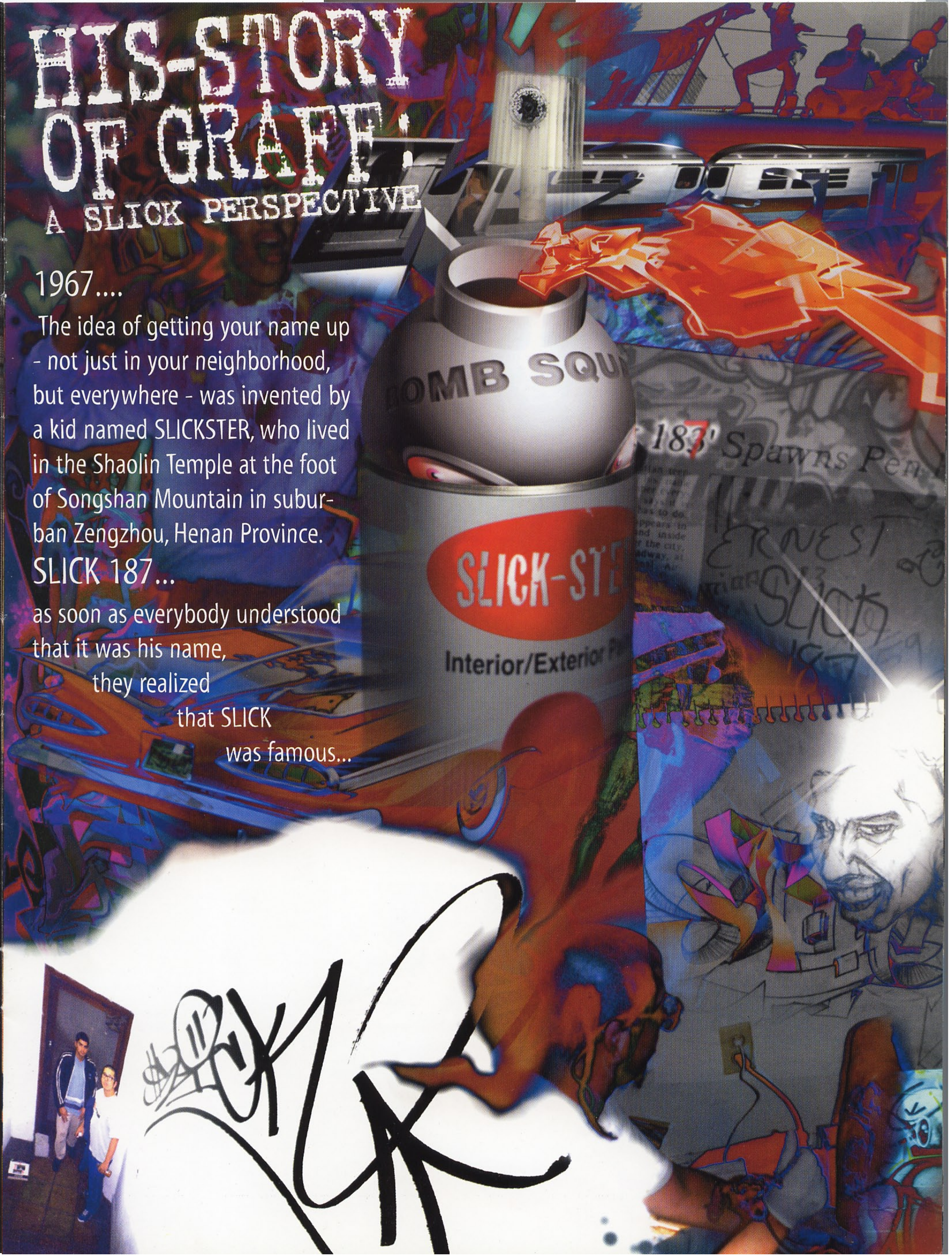
Miner WCA, LA 97

Mode 2, England 97

Coax AWR, LA 97

HIS-STORY OF GRAFF:

A SLICK PERSPECTIVE

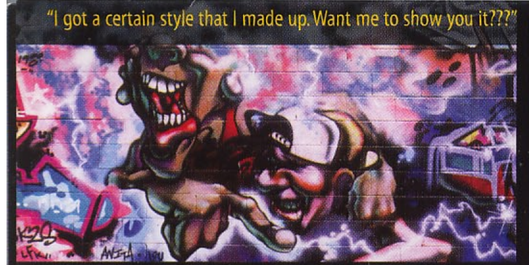

BOMB SQU
SLICK-STE
Interior/Exterior Pa
183' Spawns Pen
ERNEST
SLICK

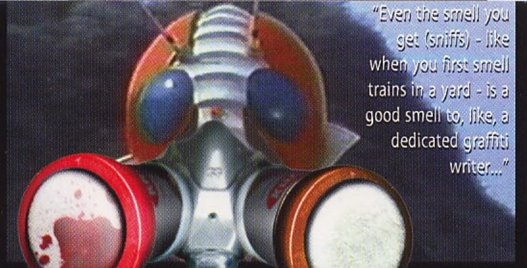
1967....

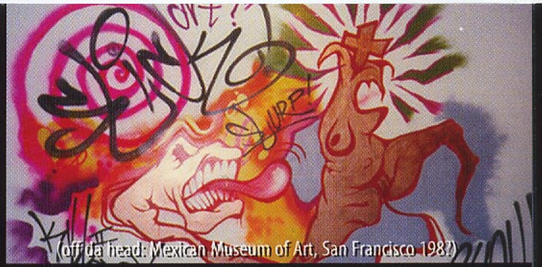
The idea of getting your name up - not just in your neighborhood, but everywhere - was invented by a kid named SLICKSTER, who lived in the Shaolin Temple at the foot of Songshan Mountain in suburban Zengzhou, Henan Province.

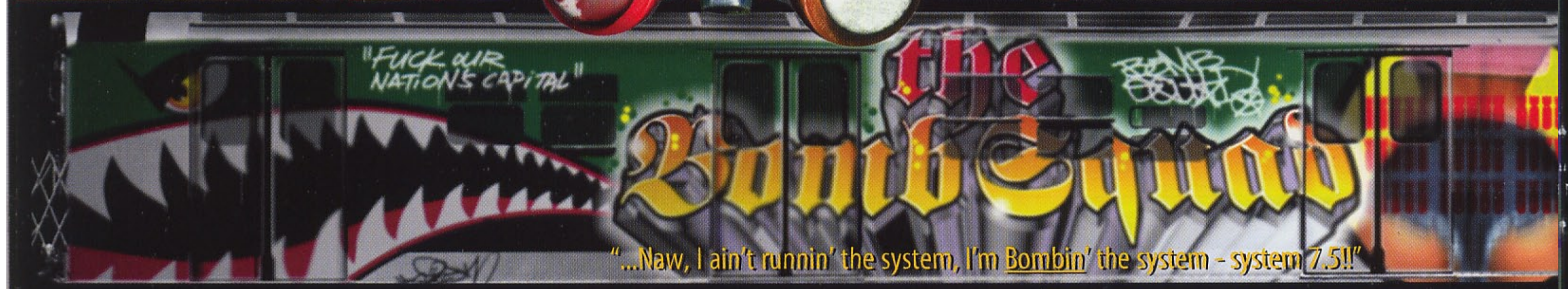
SLICK 187...

as soon as everybody understood that it was his name, they realized that SLICK was famous...


"I got a certain style that I made up. Want me to show you it???"

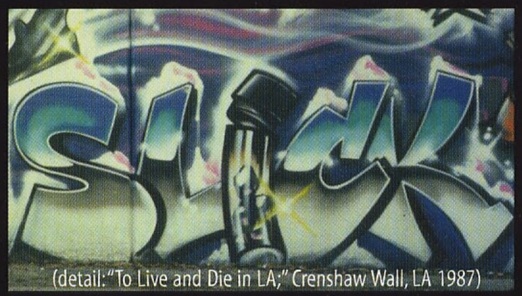

"Even the smell you get (sniffs) - like when you first smell trains in a yard - is a good smell to, like, a dedicated graffiti writer..."

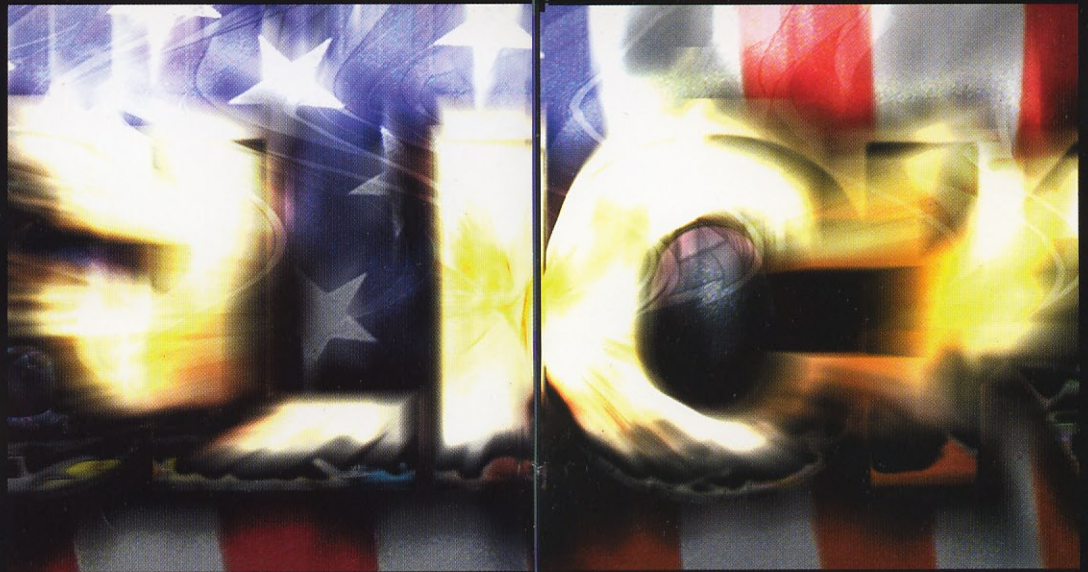

(off da head: Mexican Museum of Art, San Francisco 198?)

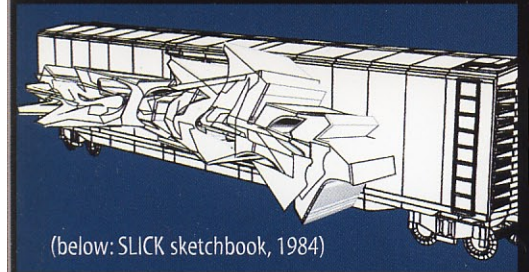


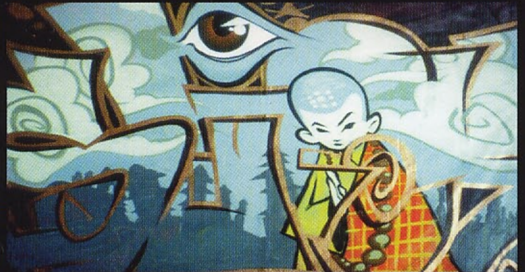
"...Naw, I ain't runnin' the system, I'm Bombin' the system - system 7.5!!"

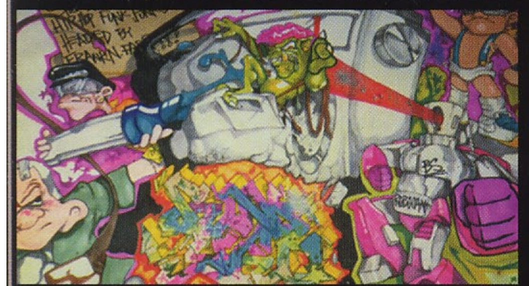
BT: So what you write, brutha?
"I write SLICK, man. SLICK."
BT: Slip? S-L-I-P?
"S-L-I-C-K!"
BT: S-L-I-C-K. Slack?
"SLICK! Slack is S-L-A. Naw, but seriously...
BT: Yeah, but who's SLICK?
"Some big Asian dude with a Lucille Ball hairdo; goes over all your burners."


(detail: "To Live and Die in LA;" Crenshaw Wall, LA 1987)

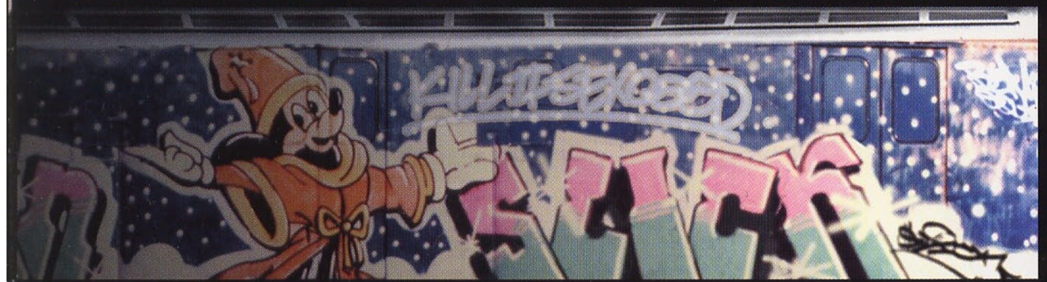



(below: SLICK sketchbook, 1984)



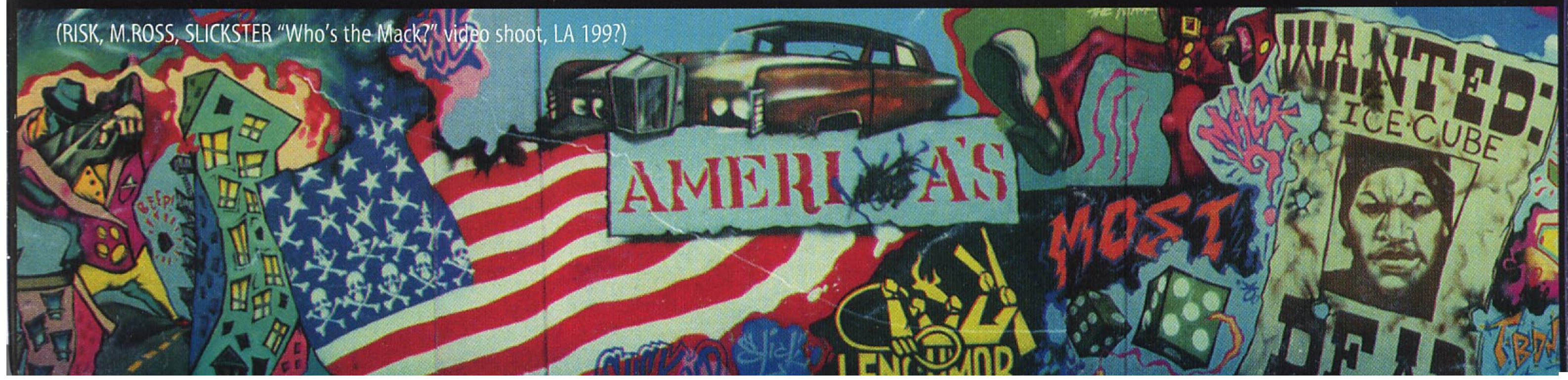


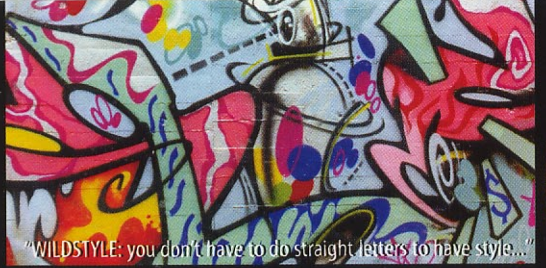
(SLICK, MARE 139, DOZE dropping bombs on Japanese TV in '97)

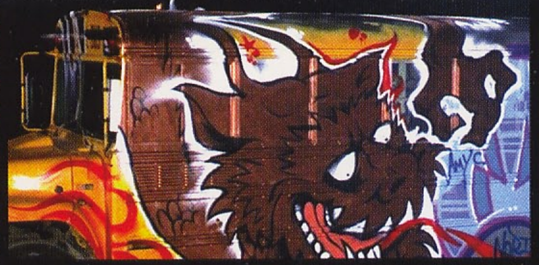


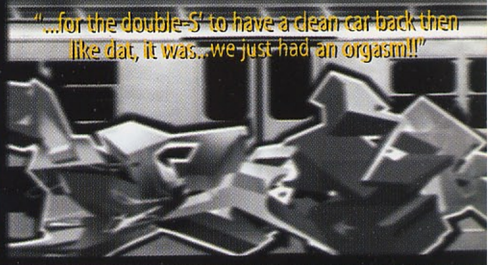
BT: 'Sup wit you, SLICK?
"To make a long story short, I'm on what dey call a thirteen-year vocation. I call it an aerosol vacation; nevermind probation. Now dey got virtual toys online, which deh really was never really...dey don't know what deh doin' no more."
BT: So who died and left you king of the "hackety-hack" yards?
"Put it this way...if MACin's has-been, then you's a 'wanna-D;' one a' deez nuts!!"

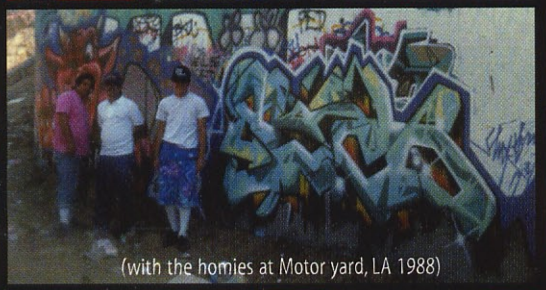
(RISK, M.ROSS, SLICKSTER "Who's the Mack?" video shoot, LA 199?)

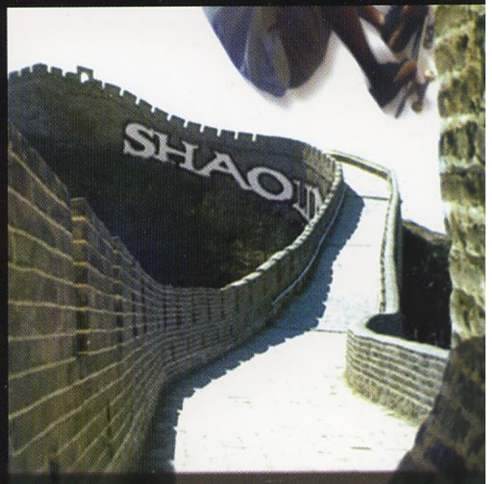


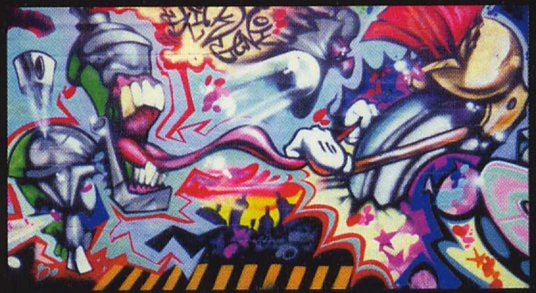

"WILDSTYLE: you don't have to do straight letters to have style..."




"...for the double-S' to have a clean car back then like dat, it was...we just had an orgasm!!"


(with the homies at Motor yard, LA 1988)

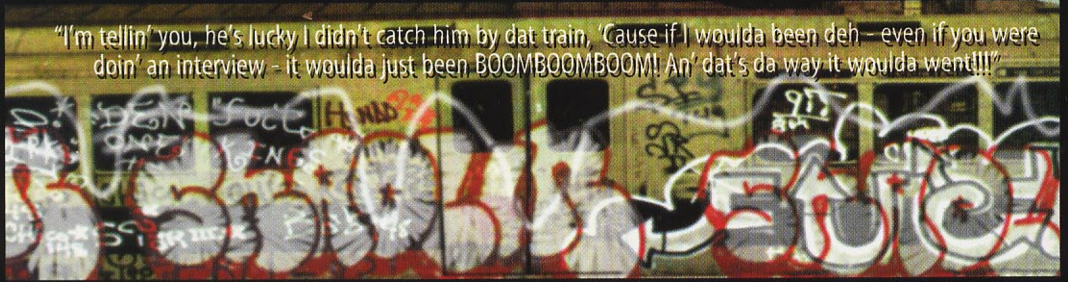


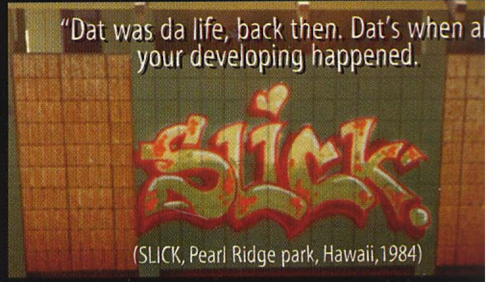


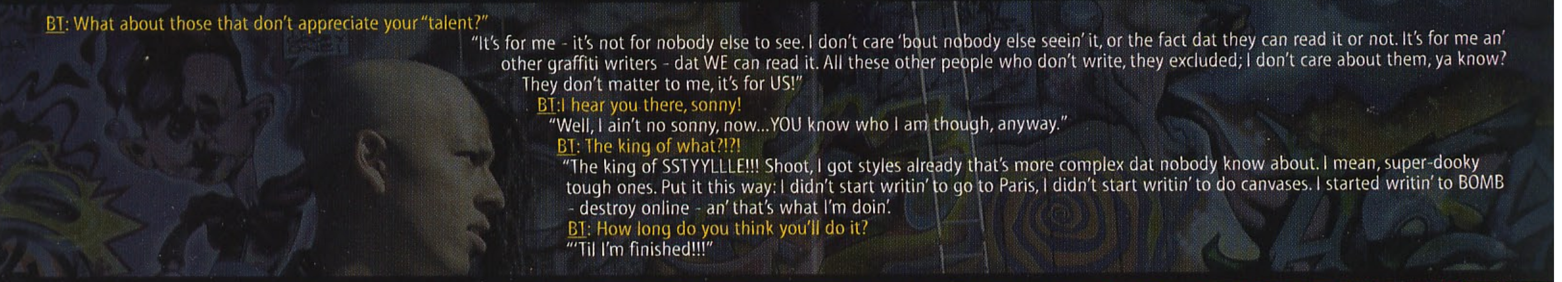
"It ain't hardly NO writers know about dis place. (This's) MY spot. Niggas know...believe it! Niggas know...(chuckles)"

"This is it! This is it! This is IT!

...those highlights came off nice."


"I'm tellin' you, he's lucky I didn't catch him by dat train, 'Cause if I woulda been deh - even if you were doin' an interview - it woulda just been BOOMBOOMBOOM! An' dat's da way it woulda went!!!"


"Dat was da life, back then. Dat's when a
your developing happened.
(SLICK, Pearl Ridge park, Hawaii, 1984)


BT: What about those that don't appreciate your "talent?"

"It's for me - it's not for nobody else to see. I don't care 'bout nobody else seein' it, or the fact dat they can read it or not. It's for me an' other graffiti writers - dat WE can read it. All these other people who don't write, they excluded; I don't care about them, ya know? They don't matter to me, it's for US!"

BT: I hear you there, sonny!

"Well, I ain't no sonny, now...YOU know who I am though, anyway."

BT: The king of what?!?!

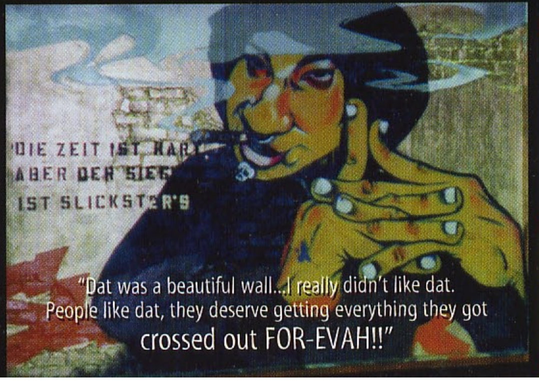
"The king of SSTYYLLLE!!! Shoot, I got styles already that's more complex dat nobody know about. I mean, super-dooky tough ones. Put it this way: I didn't start writin' to go to Paris, I didn't start writin' to do canvases. I started writin' to BOMB - destroy online - an' that's what I'm doin'.

BT: How long do you think you'll do it?

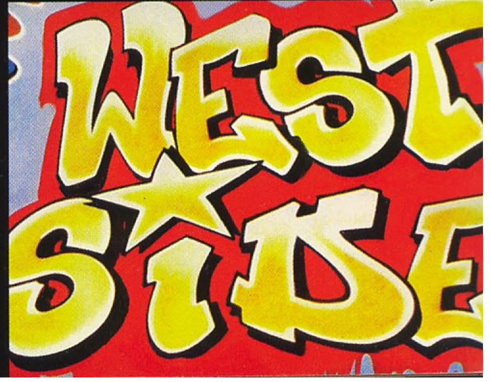
"'Til I'm finished!!!"

BT: ...and what would you do if I took a can and went over your graffiti?

"I keel you, maaannn!!!"



"Dat was a beautiful wall...I really didn't like dat. People like dat, they deserve getting everything they got crossed out FOR-EVAH!!"

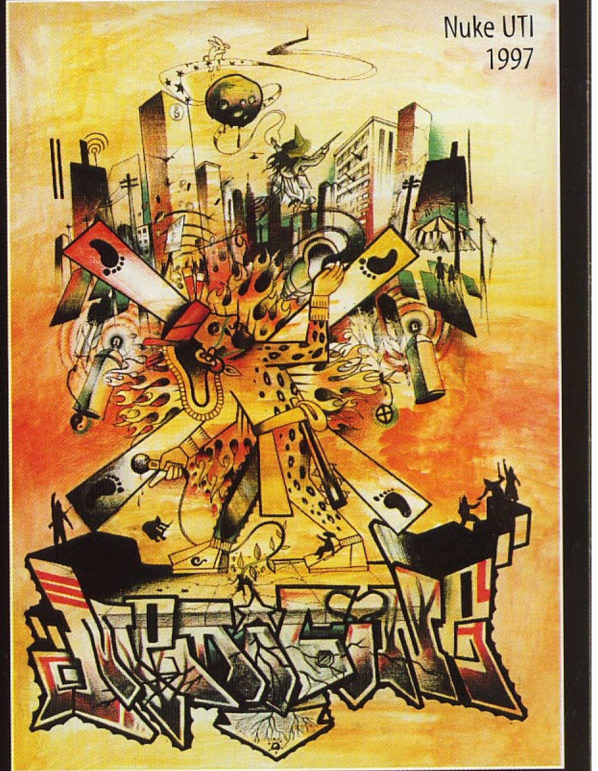


city of lost children

¿ WHAT SUCH IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAIN THE WHOLE WORLD AND LOSE HIS OWN SOUL ??
HAZ

BIG TIME™

The Magazine of Urban Art and Expression

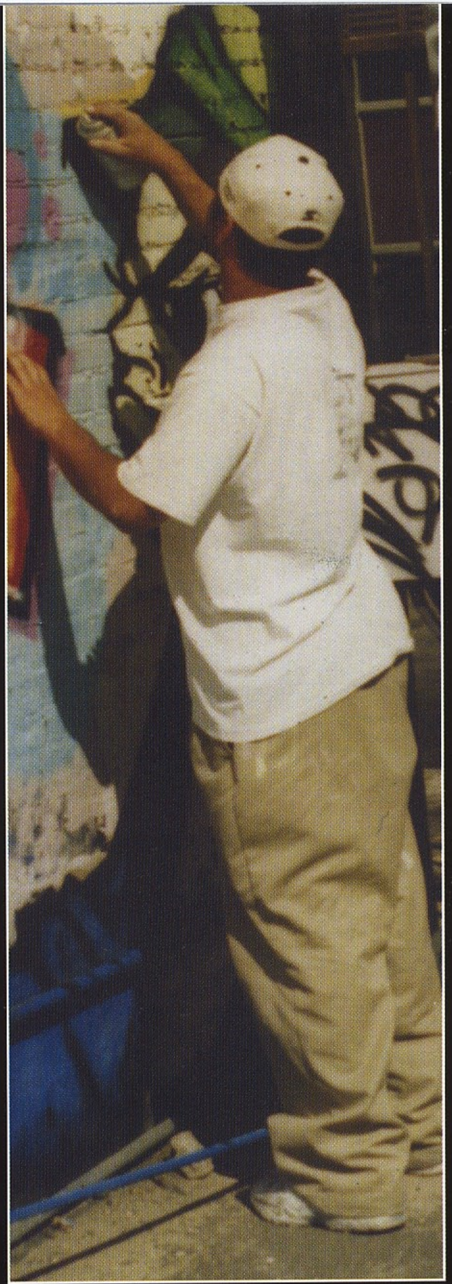


Nuke UTI
1997

IGNORANCE AND GREED. ALLOW YOU TO PROCEED YOUD RATHER PERSUE DEATH THAN ADDMIT... DEFEA

A 90'S GHETTO ART WAKE-UP SCRIPT

yo, yo, check this out...



To all the true-blue ghetto artists of the world, wake up and peep game: since old times, the poor and native people of the world - of all races - have always invented arts, sports, music and culture to celebrate life and express themselves. they did not have complicated gadgets or expensive "toys." "Ghetto" folks would get down and rock styles of music, clothing, art, etc. that was filled with color, flavor and "soul."

But there is a type of gutless person that is trapped in a mentality where to express oneself openly and frankly and to floss rhythm and color is considered a no-no. This is known as the Victorian mentality; i.e. "yuppies." These characters come in all shapes, sizes, and colors, but have this in common: they are selfish, wealthy and shallow (educated dummies). They're always poking around being nosy, going over to the villages and ghettos of the world to bite and steal ghetto styles, sports, clothes and culture because they have no creativity or soul of their own. So they take these things, complicate them, make rules and mass-produce them. It then becomes "official" (only when they "discover" it). Then it becomes trendy and gets played out, etc. These fools have invaded our art form...

In Tijuana, Mex. 1996

In all the major cities, graff was a natural form of expression for the poor that could have only developed in the ghetto because the factors needed to form Hip Hop culture existed only in the ghetto during those times. This included all inner cities or "bad" parts of different towns. Later, magazines and art shows came out and the yuppie kids got wind of what was happening; so they started showing up at the art shows, Hip Hop events, etc. But for all you old-timers, think back and remember when buses, landmarks, trains, yards, etc. were being rocked, there were no rich kids running the streets rocking like us. As a matter of fact, until mags, computers, yuppie college student photographers, etc. came along, there were few rich kids that could hang with those crazy times. Now, you got rich kids from every major city fronting like they're taking over, doing bit styles, with no soul or hiding their lack of style with bright colors.

This is the way you earn your props in the U.S. nowadays. Before, writers would have to roam the streets, walking or on the bus day and night being open to attack from cops, gangbangers, bus drivers, heroes and other hostile writers. We never had cars just fake bus passes and smooth hustles. Every writer was "accountable" for dumb actions or dissing, and could catch beatdowns or battles at writer's corners, yards, or in the streets. Yet, they make everyone believe that they're out rocking. They get fame not by paying dues, but by making a magazine.

They couldn't come correct even if they wanted to. Since they don't live in the ghetto, they never got to see all the unsung ghetto heroes that have rocked throughout the years. Not to mention that they judge the quality of graff by materialistic standards, because hey have the money to buy lots of good cans and don't have the same financial obstacles as a poor writer; so they also have more time to be painting. Therefore, among themselves, it becomes all about "how many" and "how big" their colorful, soulless copycat pieces are. They also incorporate lots of realism and illustration due to their art-school backgrounds and influence. Notice this: in recent years, lots of the more "sophisticated" technical productions are done by yuppie writers. When you talk to them, they claim that they got hardships, yet they always seem to have nice cars, money, food, lots of cans, etc. and go home to a nice environment while you hop on the bus and go back to a place looking exactly like the area you just left. Props, by ghetto standards, are earned by the ones who spend countless hours and years racking, bombing and piecing with very little resources.

Ghetto writers had to have game, heart and balls to survive among many predators; something that yuppie writers lack. Some yuppies do things to make us believe they're down, but like the song says, "ain't nothing like the real thing, baby." We do graff naturally, without following set formulas, patterns and guidelines taught to us. It forms as a by-product of living the real life.

But our legends live on, in the stories and histories passed on from older writer to younger one. The new ghetto writers are still making local history, but get less recognition because all the attention is focused on the graff going on in the yuppie world. Therefore, young ghetto writers go largely unrecognized.

The time has come for the ghetto artists of the world to take action. Years back, ghetto art would have messages and stood for something higher than ourselves. Just look at Lee's whole-cars, or the many other pieces that kicked some science. Alot of older artists abandoned the passion to teach through their art, and instead assimilated into the materialistic yuppie system. We need to keep our eyes on the tags once more; the raw ghetto talent. We need to make our own magazines to use as a forum for the writers it was meant for: the local ghetto artists. This is done by documenting the work of inner-city kids, asking them who they give props to; who's rocking in their reality.

Look; there's nothing wrong with being well-off. Just don't come into our scene and front like you're hard, 'cause you'll get spotted, dissed, and treated like a wet food stamp. It's exactly the same situation as the colonizing of native lands. The yuppies see, come, and learn the ropes. Then they use technology and resources to dominate. Today, graffiti is the new frontier; the wealthy are beginning to dominate our scene. But - like the old days - some natives ain't going out like that. I'm committed to using every God-given talent I possess to uplift ghetto youth, and to teaching the yuppies the ways of respecting their surroundings and the purity of our art. If the greedy ones would have stopped and listened to what the native cultures had to say about respecting what God gave us, the world would have been in better shape. The "civilized" dummies with their devouring, wasting, polluting and selfish racing against each other wouldn't have screwed up the whole Earth.

This is not aimed at any particular race or person, but if the shoe fits, wear it. There's a little bit of healer and destroyer in all of us, but it's time to listen to the healer. This time, we're doing it for all the fallen homeboys and homegirls of the ghettoes of the world.

Love.

SKILL ONE UTI FORCE
SOUTHSIDE L.A.
Doing time for art, not crime.

BOB BRYAN:

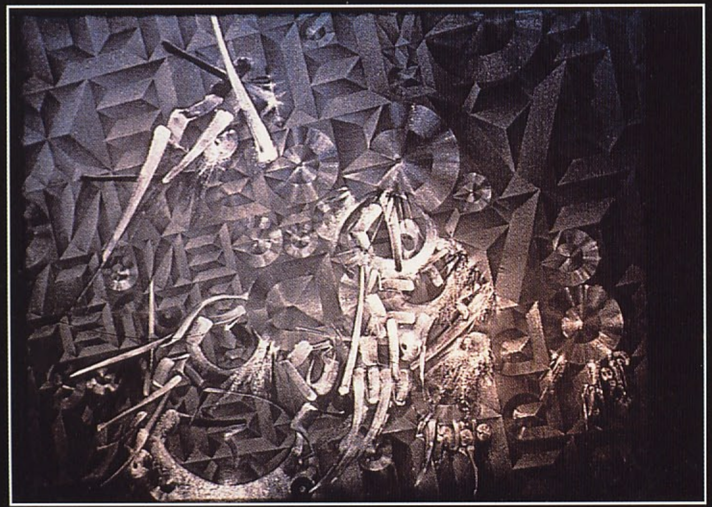
Cultural Programmer

"You have to understand something: Los Angeles, Ca. is Hollywood. We create software - programming - that programs people all over the world. Cultures are changed by what we create here." So says Bob Bryan, creator of 1995's Graffiti Verité documentary on L.A. graffiti art. Bryan (who owns his own video production company and is a longtime Hollywood filmmaker/producer) should know. His stripped-down approach to the diversity of politics, age, class and philosophy within the "La-La" writing scene has won countless awards and acclaim the world over.

Bryan got the idea for doing a documentary on graffiti art after meeting artist TOONZ one night in a Hollywood alley while the artist was working on a canvas for an opera. Shocked at what seemed to be an odd combination of ideas ("graffiti," "canvas" and "opera"), Bryan began asking questions. "What I found out was that truly these were artists and that the mediums they work on far exceeded the stereo-types. I found that they weren't criminals, vandals, or gangsters, but artists who had something to say. They had an art history and an aesthetic that I knew nothing about, and I thought that if I knew nothing about it, then there had to be a large number of people who knew nothing about it. I thought it was valid in terms of what they were saying." So began the process of documenting the culture. "My intentions were to counter the programming that was put down by traditional, conventional media sources which basically, for some reason, wanted to show graffiti art in a negative sense; and I realized it was really very positive. I wanted that story to be told... I've always said that the graffiti art movement was like a movement with a bad publicist. If we look towards the media's image of graffiti we would think of graffiti artists only in a negative sense; TV depicts writers negatively and print depicts writers negatively. Therefore, the audience or public perceives graff artists negatively because they get their information from the media. Once people see...(Graffiti Verité) they invariably turn their view around. It's just lack of education - they're not educated as to what's really going on with the graffiti aesthetic. They haven't been exposed to the positive nature of it. *They have been programmed by negative programming*. Verité means truth and - for me - the only way to get the truth out would be through the writers." To that end, Bryan deliberately withheld the opportunity to give the haters equal air time. "That point of view is already out there - strong. What would create balance in software - in terms of programming - would be the graffiti artists' point of view. I definately structured (the video) in a way that would change people to understand that it isn't about this commune idea- this 'group think.' It's about independent artists."

Not content with ending it there, Bryan organized The First International Graffiti Art Competition earlier this year because, as he says, "I felt it was time now for people to understand the international socio/political context that graffiti comes out of; that it isn't just something that happens in L.A. or New York, but something that has evolved out of history all over the world. I wanted to educate the world audience to the 'big picture.'" The winners of the competition will be included in Bryan's follow-up video, The Art of International Graffiti, which is currently in its final stages of completion. Judging for the competition was done by a cross-section of gallery curators, actors, painters, doctors, lawyers, and even some graff heads (including members of the *BIG TIME* staff),and it was held at the Museum of Arts, Downtown Los Angeles in late August. Work was submitted from Russia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Australia, Denmark, Germay, England, Canada, Cleveland, the Bronx and even Pasadena. The winners will be receiving plaques in honor of their achievements by mail. Of the competiton, Bryan states "I sincerely hope that the positive media exposure that the winners receive will turn a lot of heads in the direction of learning to appreciate - on all levels - this emerging and dynamic art form that truly transcends all stereotypes and gross generalities." So do we. For more information, contact Bob at Bryan World Productions, P.O. Box 74033, Los Angeles, Ca 90004

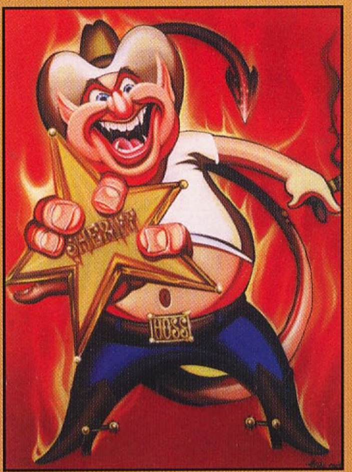
-TEMPTONE



Chaz Bojorquez's "Graffitext" received "Best of Show"

THE WILD WILD WEST

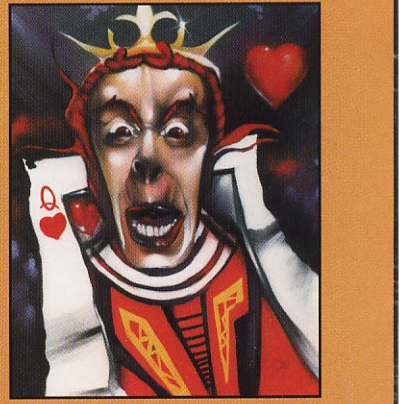
SHOWDOWN AT THE LA BREA CORRAL...



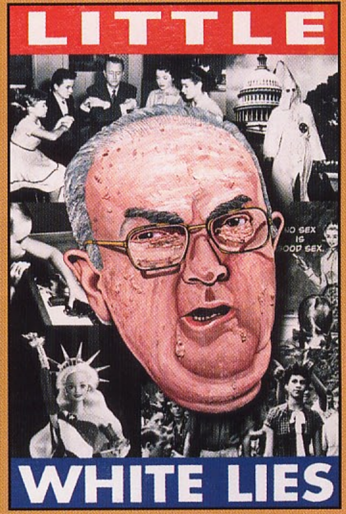
Axis CBS

It was a warm summer evening in late July when the slick production team at I.C.U. (In Creative Unity) held the opening reception for one of the best graff shows of the year, the WILD WILD WEST. Located in a casual storefront artspace on LaBrea, an eclectic mix of Rastas, Bohemians, B-Boys and assorted Hollywood hipsters convened on the scene to peep the handiwork of some of the West's best collection of fatcap fanatics from L.A. to the Bay. Outside, heads were milling about, coolin' with the crew and enjoying the easy aroma of choice smoke wafting through the L.A. night. Inside, the room was filled to capacity as viewers were treated to the politically-charged work of SPIE IRIE, ROBBIE CONAL, MEAR CBS and NUKE UTI, as well as the wide variety of fly styles flexed by KOFIE UTI, VYAL COI, RELIC STN, AXIS CBS, BASH MAK and PRECISE LOD. Others, such as COAX AWR, TWIST THR, SLICK K2S and CHAZ BOJORQUEZ experimented with more traditional subject matter and/or materials (SLICK even busted some ill digital stuff - his "Chairman Mao" piece was kinda bugged) while SACRED COI, MINER WCA and TEMPT STN got down with the abstractstilos. The B-Boys kept the heat up flexing 1990's and tight freezes while DJ's SOLAR, KID W.I.K. and GABE-REAL kept the crowd live in the cut. In fact, the party was so live that even the boys in blue wanted to be down. They showed up - 15 squad cars and 2 ghetto birds deep - to represent their world-reknown baton skills and challenge all style kings and "Rodney" kings to a showdown in the B-Boy circle. Since nobody wanted any (they've protected and "served" all crews since 1781), the show was officially over and graff fans slipped away back into the night. Despite the minor setback, however, the crew at I.C.U. were successful in their fight to keep the show running for the month of August and vow to continue to produce more tight shows in the future. Other writers included in the show were ASYL'M, CRE8, SABER, DEMER, CHUCK, MAN ONE, JIMER, DUKE, NOEK, PHEVE, SKILL, NERV, SK, XPRES, YEM AND SWANK. Peace to all.

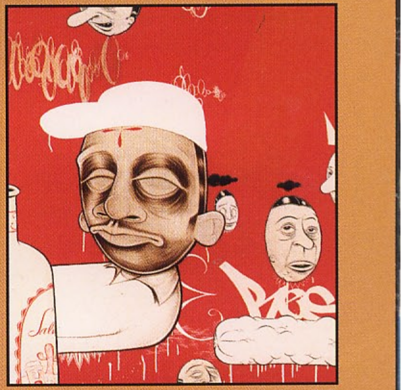
-C.M.



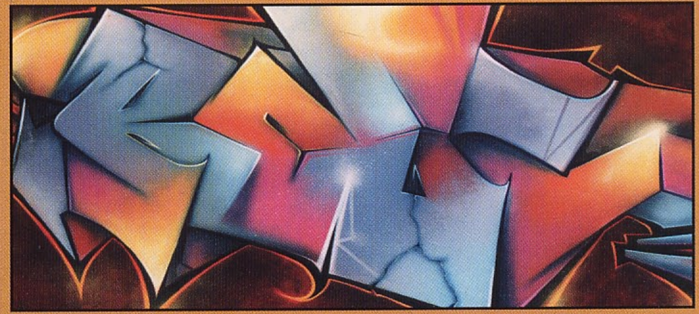
Asylum SH



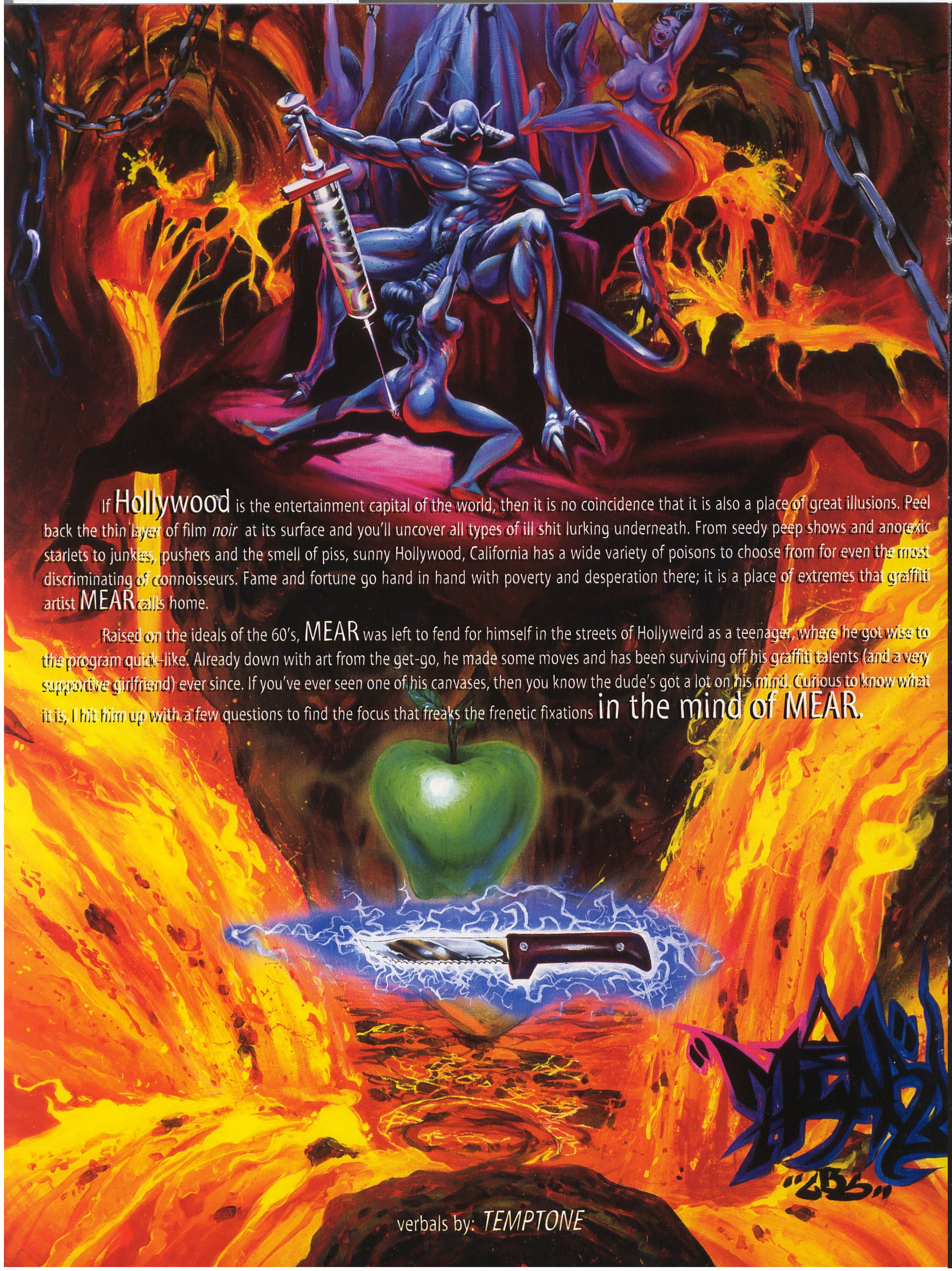
Robbie Canal



Twist THR



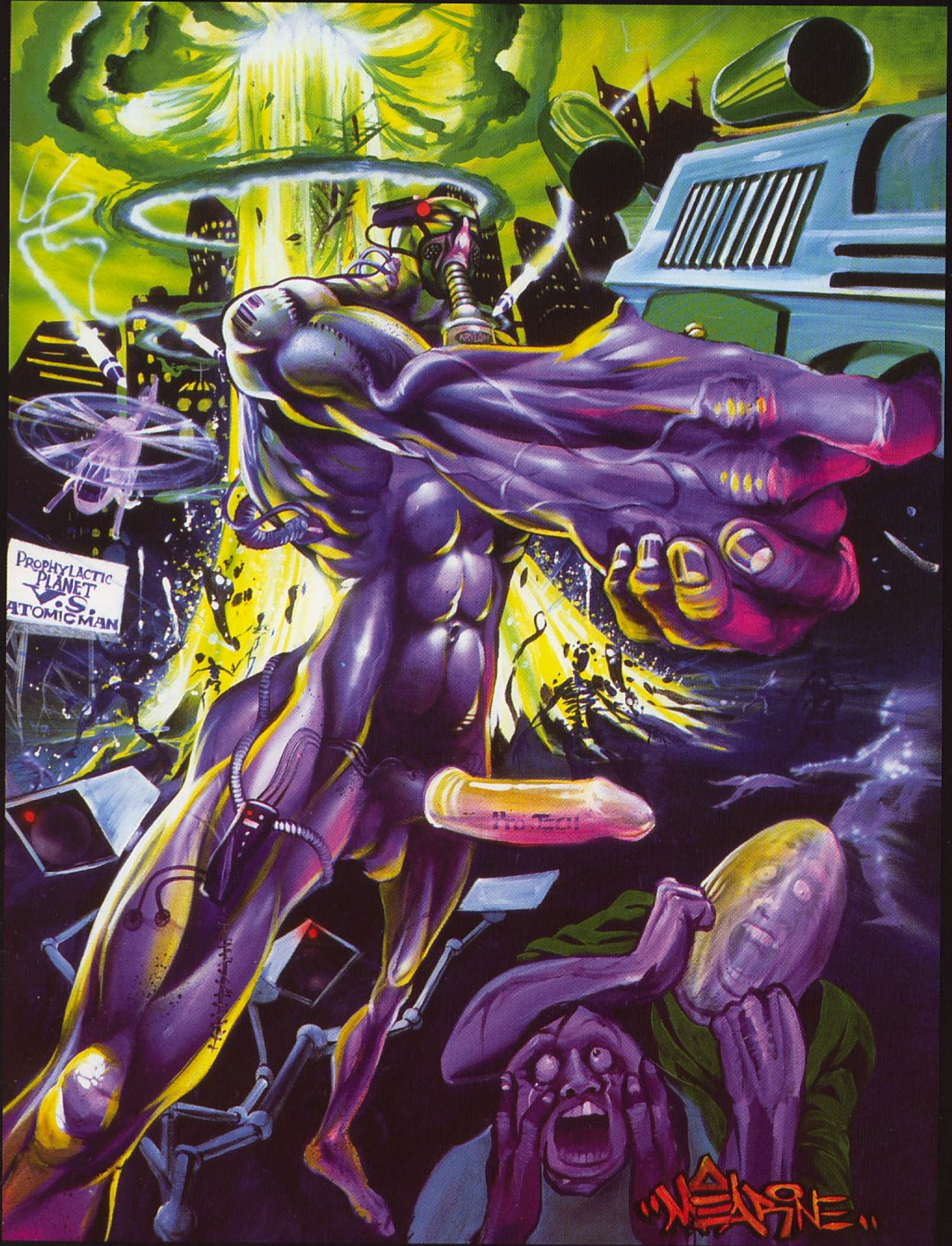
Relic K2S STN

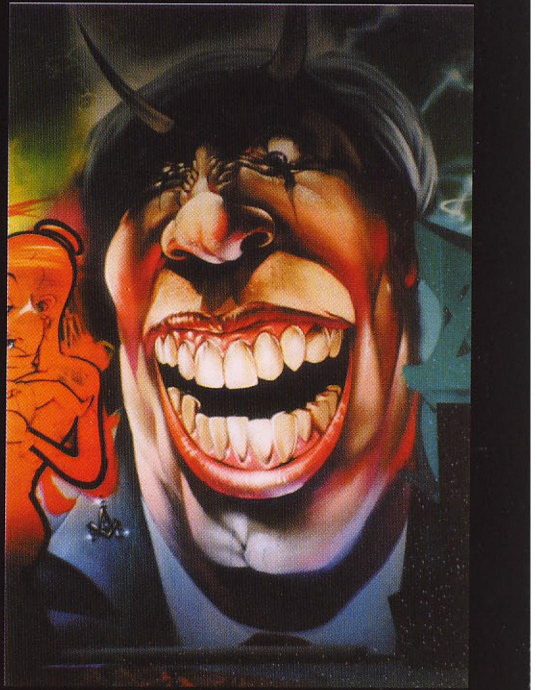


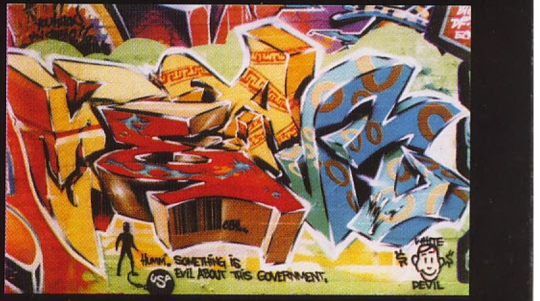
If Hollywood is the entertainment capital of the world, then it is no coincidence that it is also a place of great illusions. Peel back the thin layer of film *noir* at its surface and you'll uncover all types of ill shit lurking underneath. From seedy peep shows and anorexic starlets to junkies, pushers and the smell of piss, sunny Hollywood, California has a wide variety of poisons to choose from for even the most discriminating of connoisseurs. Fame and fortune go hand in hand with poverty and desperation there; it is a place of extremes that graffiti artist MEAR calls home.

Raised on the ideals of the 60's, MEAR was left to fend for himself in the streets of Hollyweird as a teenager, where he got wise to the program quick-like. Already down with art from the get-go, he made some moves and has been surviving off his graffiti talents (and a very supportive girlfriend) ever since. If you've ever seen one of his canvases, then you know the dude's got a lot on his mind. Curious to know what it is, I hit him up with a few questions to find the focus that freaks the frenetic fixations in the mind of MEAR.

verbals by: *TEMPTONE*






HUMM. SOMETHING IS EVIL ABOUT THIS GOVERNMENT.
USA
WHITE DEVIL

Where do you get your ideas for your subject matter? I noticed a lot of your stuff deals with Armageddon and these real catastrophic scenarios. Is that imagery constant in your work?

Yeah.

How did that come about?

That's a combination of movies I saw as a child and of my mother being a completely open-minded person giving me full support with my creative direction, teaching me the truth about who I am and what America really is, and all of our positions in society and class and roles and all that. Then I got into books more and basically travelling, taking psychedelics, opening my eyes through the illusion.

A lot of writers seem to be going in the direction of galleries right now and there seems to be some controversy over that in the subculture. Do you feel like you're moving away from the roots of graff at all or do you feel that you still have a dialogue with the streets?

Well, I'm changing. When I was 15, graffiti was new to me and I hadn't experienced it and I was looking up to certain people who were doing it and I was watching what they were doing. I got into it in the late 80's; but when the early 90's hit and I had got totally serious, that whole time period of what I experienced is different than, say, what the writers nowadays that are true to the streets are experiencing. So to me, it's all about change and if you can change with it. To get into a gallery, to me, is like an important part of my life. I get a lot of criticism for doing galleries and painting on canvas. A lot of people say that this isn't graffiti art; this is supposed to be separate and blah blah blah. But to me, painting on walls is just like painting on canvas; you're just using different mediums - it's all in the area of creativity. The transition from cans to brush was like a retro stage for me anyway, because I used to paint with brushes when I first started getting into art. I was into pencils and markers for years. Then I got into watercolors, oils and acrylics. When I got real serious with my crew, I stopped painting canvases and got into painting walls all the time. I dunno; I was more serious to get down with canvas after I experienced painting on walls.

Who were some of the people that influenced your work?

Definately Frank Frazetta, Rick Griffin, Robert Williams, Roger Dean, a lot of Paper Tiger classic editions and different rock album art like Yes and Asia... yeah, I was really into the human form. Anatomy and backgrounds are good to get into.

How about as far as writing?

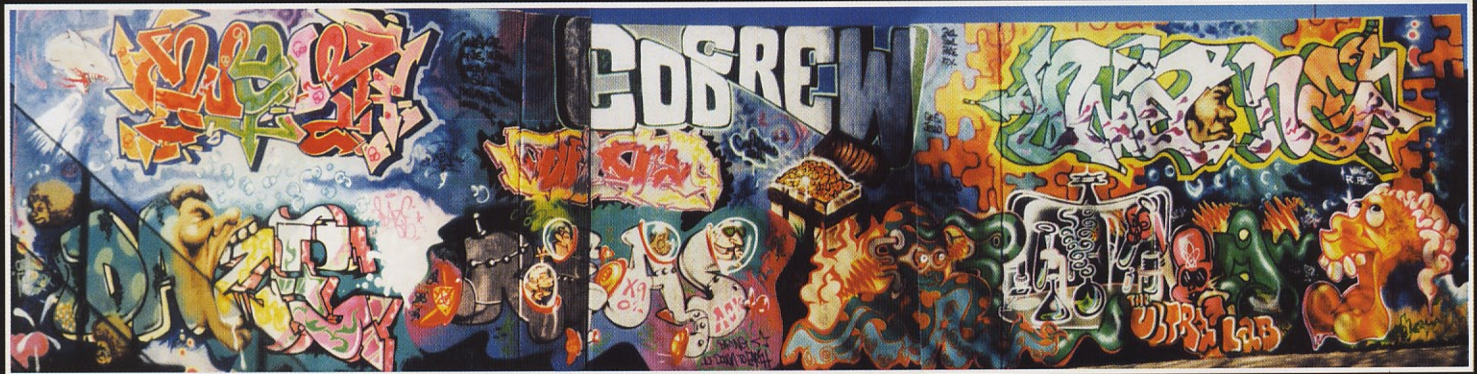
Oh, man...Miner, Wisk, Skept, Skate, KSN, Risky was a big influence. Hex, Slick, big influences on me. They taught me a lot just by watching them do their thing. All the New York writers, originally, was what shocked me. I was in jr. high with SER WCA, MECK and COOLBOY and someone brought Style Wars into metal shop. I was fascinated with it because those kids seemed like they were on track - they were growing up their own way. At the time, I was the only white boy in an all-Salvadoran neighborhood and we'd get into truble a lot. But for me, graffiti was the connection of combining the trouble with the art. I dunno; I was tripping out on where I come from and all these things school never taught me. I've just been breaking down the human race, trying to find its origins to satisfy my own curiosity. But, I guess you gotta go to school for that.

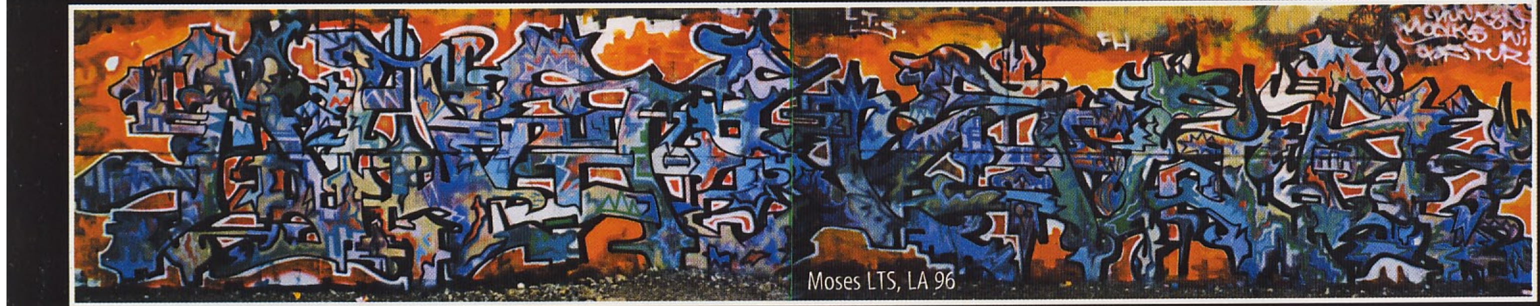
I think I've learned more being out of school than I ever did in school. The way the educational system is structured usually dulled my curiosity to learn. It depends; I mean, Malcolm X educated himself in prison and came out putting top scholars in check.

Yeah, it's fucked up. Like, in school we're learning the colonial version of history which really doesn't account for anyone else's history or even respect their versions of history and I'm always trying to figure out who was the oldest race; trying to break down all this Masonic shit.

Like the pyramid on the back of the dollar bill. It has that "NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM" (new world order) jammie. That always made me nervous because I always wondered what they meant by that.

MEAR ROCK continued on page 20

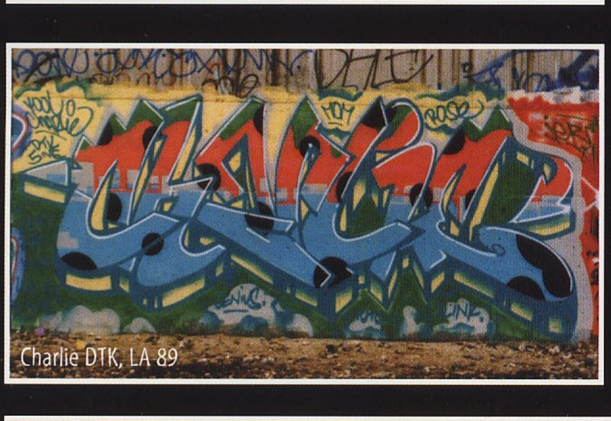




Moses LTS, LA 96

Diego & Cesp FMT in Chicago 97

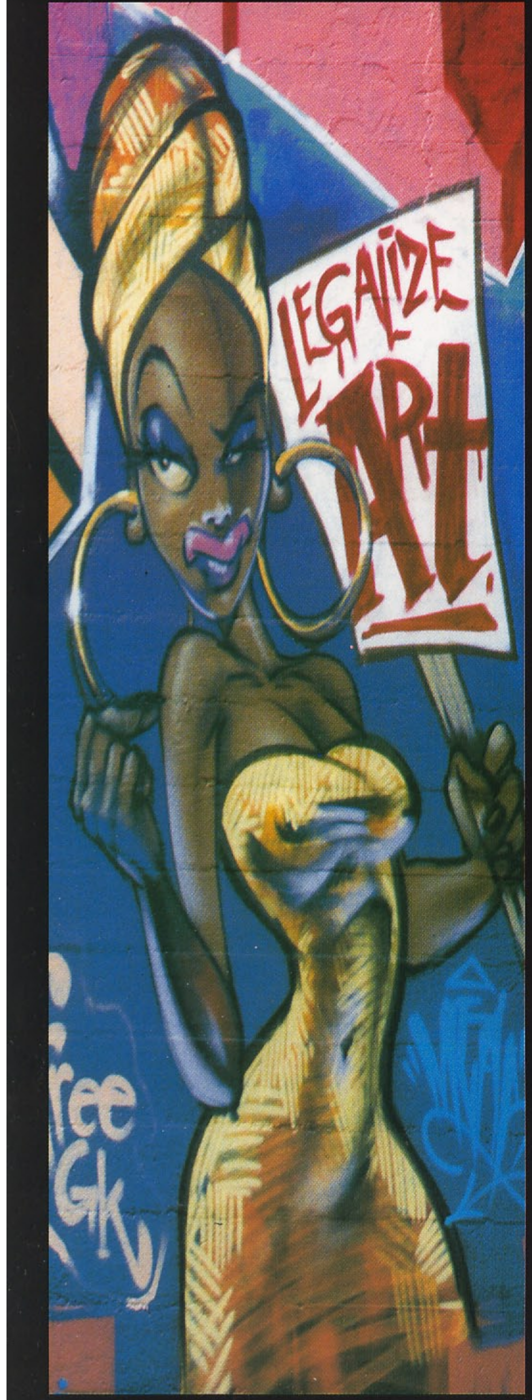
Selt UTI, LA 96



Charlie DTK, LA 89

Monk SCA Rollin' thru Minneapolis

Nuke UTI, LA 96



MEAR ROCK continued from page 17

There's a lot of books on it; actually, alot of those books are like life - they've got a lot of truth and a lot of bullshit in 'em.

True. You've gotta be able to know how much of what they're saying you can actually accept and how much you should reject; nothing is objective.

Yeah, and they always go from conspiracy to aliens, you know? Personally, I believe we're not alone. Those fuckin' crop fields are the most amazing things, like how they've been flattened - every individual wheat hasn't been broken. They've been braided and weaved from the inner circle out, like magnetically. They're beyond human and it's obvious. That's my newest thing. I've given up on Masonic shit - the Illuminati, Rosacrusians (did I spell it right? -ed), Mormons and all this crap - and I'v egotten into the obviousness of the streets. Big Brother is watching every move we make; the books and prophecies and paranoid people have all been saying it. There's cameras everywhere, we're watching cop shows on TV, people at work getting busted on the company camera. Even from George Orwell's books back in the day.

Yeah, like 1984 to, say, Brave New World. Have you read that book?

You mean that one by Aldous Huxley? Yeah!! Like Nostradamus or Edgar Casey; all these prophecies that break it down and it's all here now. We kinda created most of it ourselves, anyway. I.m just trying to look through the illusions at the reality on the street.

There's a book by Foucault that peeps the dehumanizing effects of 24-hour surveillance on prison inmates and the psychological damage it causes; then you look at every major intersection in L.A. and they've got these new cameras that were quietly put up...

...and we're payin' for 'em, and if we're payin' for 'em we should've had the ability to vote for 'em. But we didn't, and it's scary.

Just like those cop shows you mentioned. It all seems like some new authoritarian agenda they're pushing.

Paranoia too.It causes people to become paranoid and I believe whatever you think about will manifest itself. It's time for us to start checking ourselves; make a change. We need to elevate ourselves. That's where I see graffiti art going - moving up. We're becoming more conscious; reaching a higher level. We need to come up with a new language. Last year the President got on TV and said graffiti is destroying America. They're trying to blame crime on graffiti. Fools need to elevate their minds and their styles and not just this fake evening news bullshit getting up for fame. There's just so much frightening futuristic stuff happening that people need to be aware of - overpopulation, cloning, or even prisons becoming privatized.

There's big money in criminalization. I mean, incarceration is the fastest growing industry in California.

I'm happy to see Belmont Tunnel stay open for as long as it has, though. Commerce (a yard on the eastside) goes through its stages too. A lot of my crew has been active there. Our southside and eastside heads are really coming out. They're part of this new generation of up n' comin' heads from different crews. I trip on how the graff scene is like...generational. New generations keep popping up every 3-4 years with different mindframes, different directions. That's really cool; we gotta support that. Personally, I'm not into the "old school" as a term or a mentality. People need to change with the times. The B-Boy Summit let me down on that level. They cater to the Hip Hop, but when it comes to the writers, they don't really get involved. It's always the weakest link in their chain. It's like, Hip Hop has definately been blessed; it's come a long way. So has graffiti art, but only because of writers that keep it going. We have very little outside help.

I rarely see rap groups or whatever incorporate graffiti artists into their promotion or presentations, and it's wack because they're not supporting the full spectrum of Hip Hop.

I'm always patronized on jobs as if they've just dicovered it's a new art form. I really hate when that happens. It takes a lot of serious dedication to keep pushing and not let others break you down. I've been through a lot of that. It's ongoing; it's a process.

Like anything else, as long as you stay on top of yourself, you can take the art as far as you wanna take it. It's really up to you.

Yeah. I'd like to do some travelling, art direction for films, build stuff. I'm into building stuff with wood, but all of this stuff takes patience.

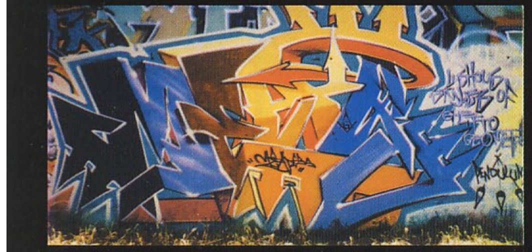
Overcome those stereotypes of what a writer is or should be.

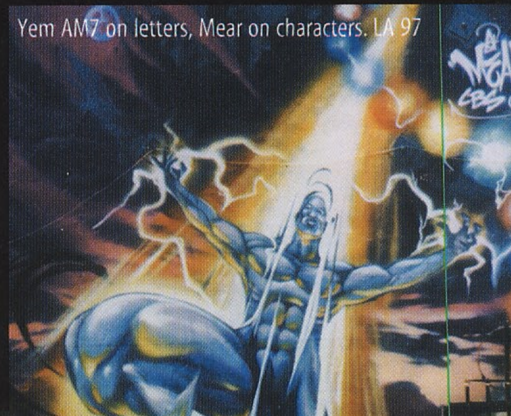
Right. Like, I already did that; I wanna move on to some new shit.

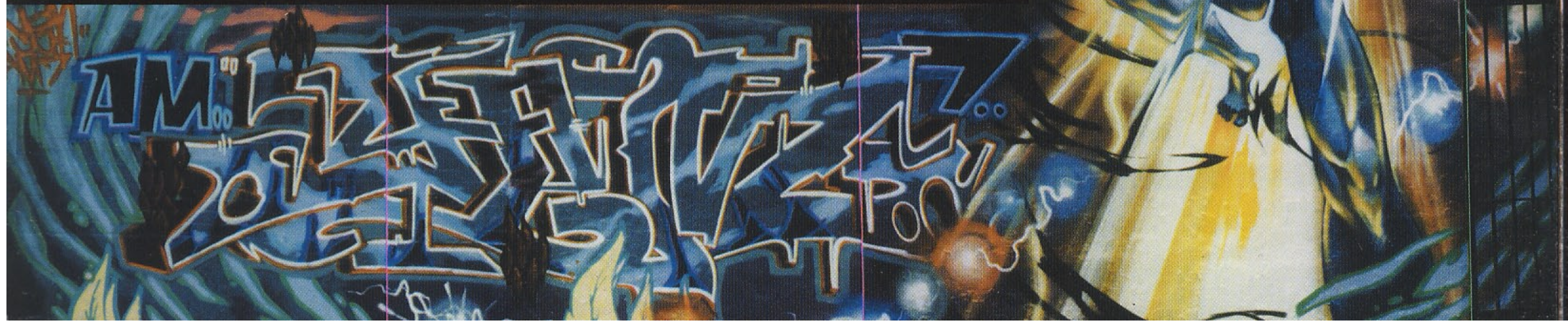
So, what's going on with you currently? Any projects?

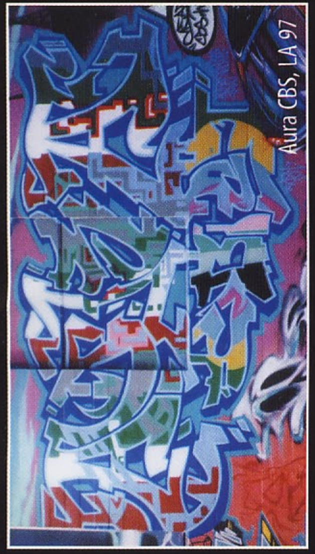
Right now I'm preparing for my first solo show in October at the Zero One Gallery. There's also gonna be a show at Cal Poly Pomona in November and the ICU show at the end of July. I've also introduced a new clothing line, put my art on posters and T-shirts, just trying to gnerate an income. I'm looking into putting out a book of my artwork next year. Just trying to spread my art out in different directions. Sculpture, electric fields. New places to bomb.

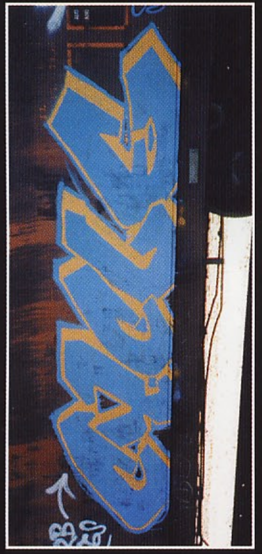
To see more of MEAR's work, peep those Conart shirts in the back of your bedroom drawer or stay tuned to future issues of BIG TIME MAGAZINE.

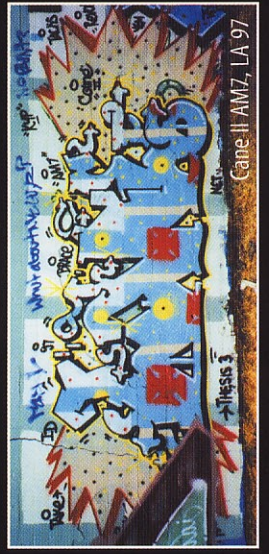


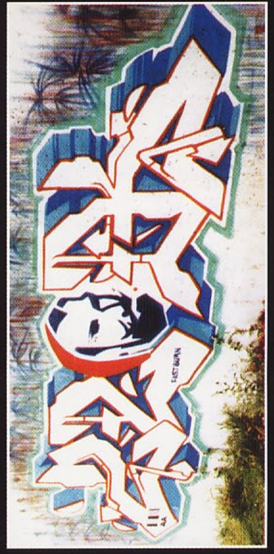

Yem AM7 on letters, Mear on characters. LA 97

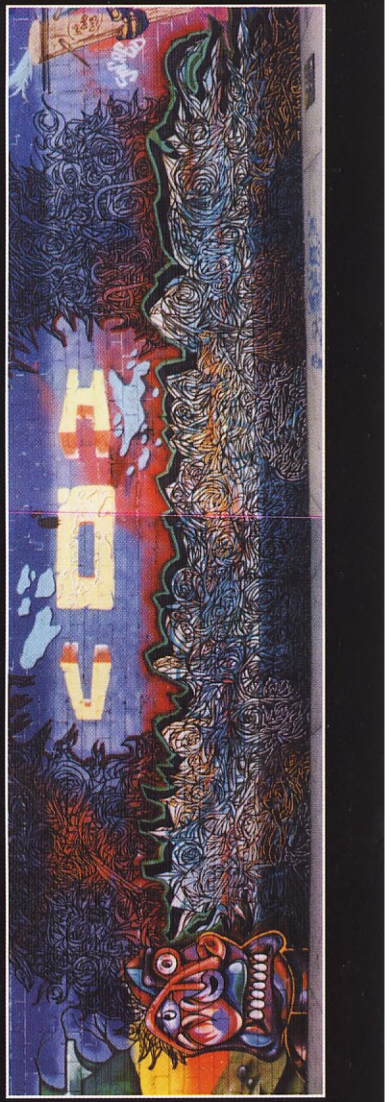


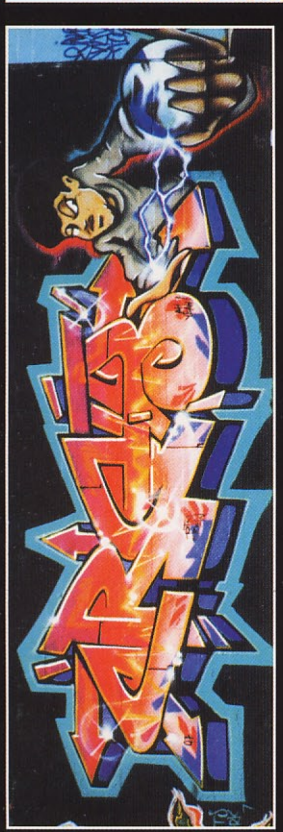

Aura CBS, LA 97

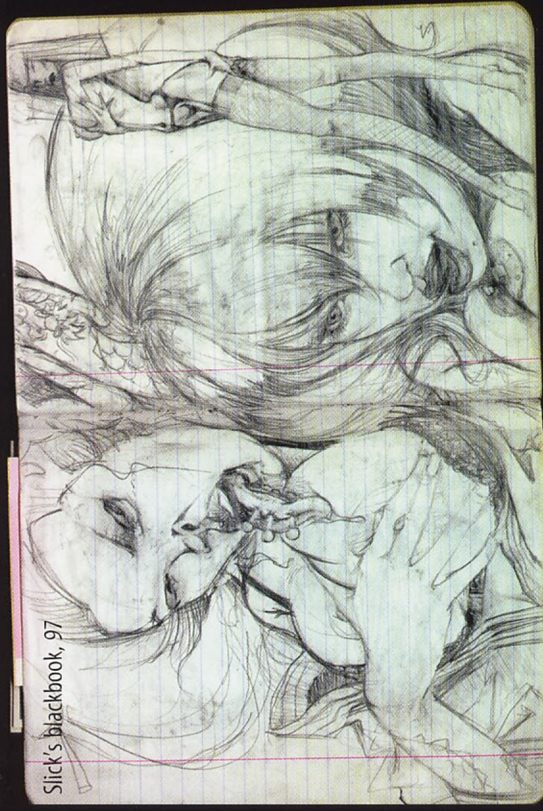


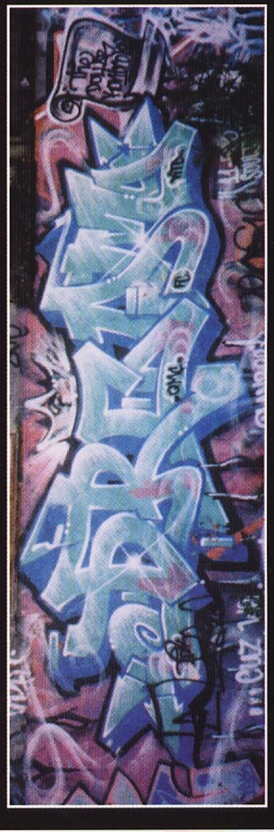

Cane II AM7, LA 97

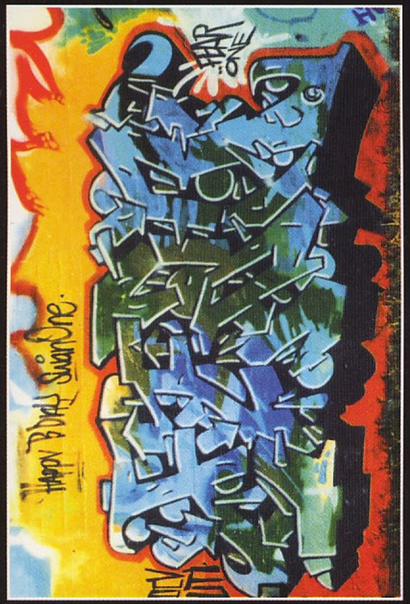


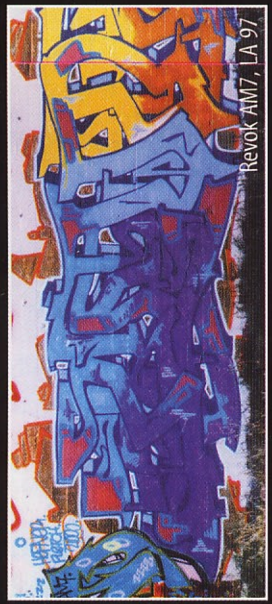





Slick's blackbook, 97



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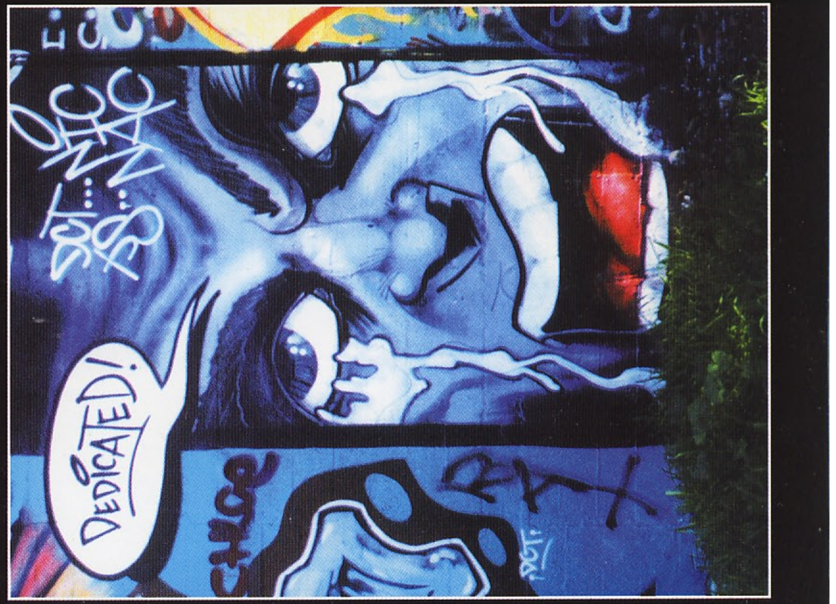
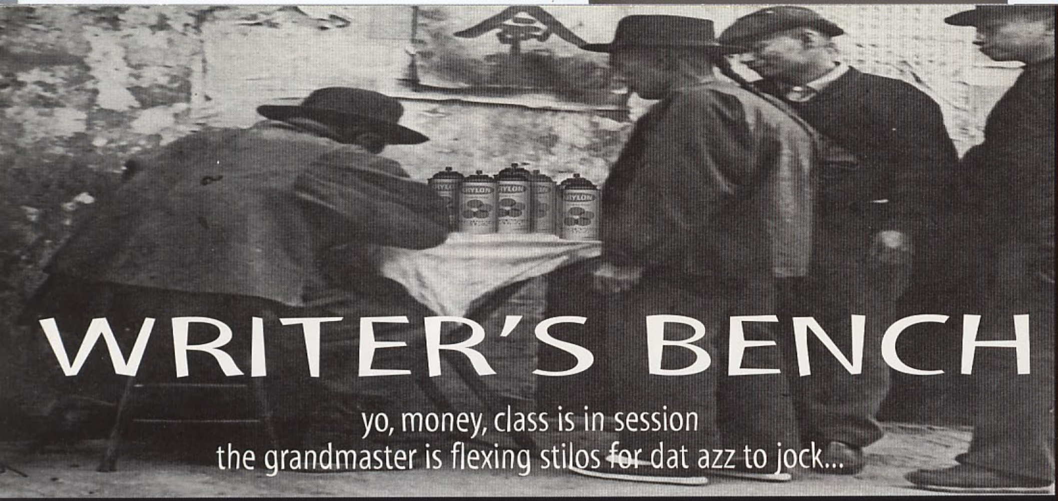


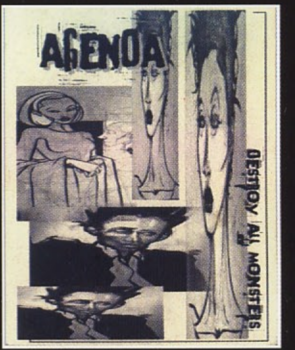


WRITER'S BENCH

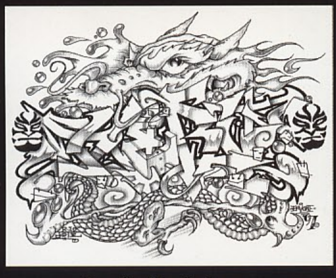
yo, money, class is in session
the grandmaster is flexing stilos for dat azz to jock...

First off, pounds go out to the YR's for keepin' shit lit up on the highways and byways of So. Cali. Hope your boy gets well soon.

Scene report: Mad ruckus been jumpin' off around town lately. AWR's COAX had some fly work showing at *AGENDA* on April 25, hosted by crewmate EKLIPS. Good art, good turnout, good music (BUS MSK fronted one of the bands) and good beer. Caught RISKY and HAZE getting their buzz on, but you didn't hear it from me doe...Over on Beverly NERV came correct with a one-man show at BlueJeans Café on May 17, with the Alizé flowing all night long. Mad heads were chillin', like DUKE K2S, Nate from GRIP, MESK K4P, MEAR and Aura, IMPS 213K, Slicky SLICK and cool MARE 139. CHUCK STG hosted *MADE IN L.A. II,* an all-day graff convention at the Latino Museum in downtown L.A. on July 12, with lots of outdoor painting sessions going on. DJ DWENDZ, whose Foundation Funkollective crew puts on an open mic Hip Hop joint every Tuesday night at the museum (call 818:210-4514 for more info) kept the beats on point while the ever-popular BLUES EXPERIMENT kicked the blues and some Azteca dancers dealt some cultura. Props to SECRET BW, COWBOY ONE, VOX, CHEMIST WGS, and everyone who showed up that day. I know it made Steve Texeida happy...Come August, the S.P.A.R.C. gallery in Venice hosted a legal painting day at the famous Pavilion, with mad crews and local media showing up. A bit of tension could be felt in the air with the heavy police prescence - notepads, cameras and all. The writers persevered, though, and at the end of the day the joint was wall-to-wall burners (controversy later erupted over XPRES CBS' piece depicting a cop beating the shit out of a punk and PHENZ' portrait of a nude woman labelled as 'pornography.' The work was eventually buffed by Parks and Rec despite SPARC's protests. Is this the Middle Ages or what? So much for freedom of expression)...Finally, Sept. 27 the Air Force Crew's *RADIOTRON* packed 'em in with B-Boyism in full effect. Old-school poppers and body-rockers BOOGALOO SHRIMP and ANIMATION broke the crowd off a lil' sum'-sum' with the Baka Boys' NICK V. as guest MC...OH YEAH: quit catching tags outside my building, kid. The landlord's tryin' to run me out this piece...PEACE. -C.M.



What? Nerv worry?



Flyer for Nerv's show.

RADIOTRON
AIRFORCE
RADIOTRON#6/7
PART1
6/7 PART1
RADIOTRON#6/7
B-BOY.COM
WARNING: Play at your own risk!!!
VHS

NEXT RADIOTRON SEPT. 27

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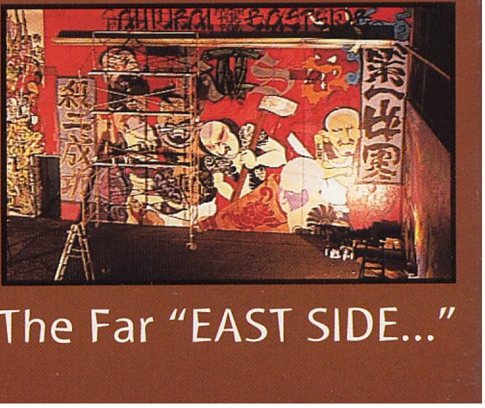

The Far "EAST SIDE..."